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DISTRICT

GAZETTEERS

BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

SHAHABAD.

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ENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

SHAHABAD.

BY

L. S. S. O'MALLEY,

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

CALCUTTA:

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PREFACE.

The original Gazetteer of Shahabad was compiled by Messrs. D. B. Allen, A. W. Mackie and H. H. Risley, and was published in 1877 in Volume XII of the Statistical Account of Bengal by Sir W. W. Hunter. The present volume is the first of a new series of District Gazetteers, in which a different arrangement has been adopted for the subject-matter and detailed statistics have been relegated to a statistical Appendix. Thanks are due to the many persons who have assisted in the preparation of the volume; and I take this opportunity to acknowledge my obligations to the Hon'ble Mr. W. A. Inglis, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Public Works Department, and Mr. J. H. Toogood, Superintending Engineer, Sone Circle, who have been so good as to revise Chapter VI, and to Messrs. W. A. Marr and G. Milne, I.C.S., Collectors of Shahabad, for the assistance they have given in checking the various articles.

L. S. S. O'M.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

J. A. S. B.—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
A. S. I.—Archæological Survey of India.
A. S. B. C.—Archæological Survey, Bengal Circle.

GAZETTEER

OF THE

SHAHABAD DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

THE district of Shahabad, which forms the south-western portion of the Patna Division, is situated between 24° 31′ and 25° 46′ north latitude, and between 83° 19′ and 84° 51′ east longitude. It contains a total area of 4,373 square miles; the principal civil station, which is also the most populous town in the district, is Arrah, situated in 25° 34′ north latitude and 84° 40′ east longitude. The district is bounded on the north by Ghāzīpur and Ballia in the United Provinces and by Sāran in Bengal; on the east by the districts of Patna and Gayā; on the south by Palāmau; and on the west by the districts of Mirzāpur and Ghāzīpur in the United Provinces. On the north the boundary is marked by the Ganges and on the east by the Son, the two rivers uniting in the north-eastern corner of the district. The Karamnāsā is the boundary with the United Provinces on the west, from near its source to its junction with the Ganges near Chausā; while the Son separates it from Palāmau on the south.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

Boundaries.

The origin of the name Shāhābād is doubtful, but it is said to be derived from the fact that, after his victory over the Afghān rulers of the Province in 1529 A.D., the Emperor Bābar pitched his camp in Arrah and there proclaimed his dominion over Bihār. In commemoration of this event, the place was called Shāhābād, or the city of the Emperor; and this name was applied subsequently to the *sarkār* within which the town was included, and eventually to the whole district.

Origin of name.

Natural divisions.

Shāhābād is divided physically into three distinct regions, the first of which consists of an extensive low-lying alluvial plain, about 550 square miles in area, forming the north of the district and lying between the river Ganges and the embankment of the main line of the East Indian Railway. It extends to the boundaries of the district on the east and west, and has evidently been formed by the recession of the Ganges from its ancient course, which old tradition and the local contour of the country prove to have flowed, many centuries ago, in nearly a straight line from Arrah to Buxar. In the northern portion of this belt of country the low lands lying along the Ganges are subject to inundation almost every year from the overflow of the river; and this riparian tract, being fertilized by the rich deposit of silt left by the receding waters, is one of the principal wheat-growing areas of Bihār.

The second region comprises the great body of the district and is some 3,000 square miles in extent. It is also a flat country of tertiary and alluvial origin, but its formation is of high antiquity when compared with the river-side land described above. It is for the most part very fertile, highly cultivated and densely populated. Its soil is generally a very tenacious clay intermixed with coarse sand; but on the east the soil is considerably lighter, and in the south towards the hills mould intermixed with ash is met with. This large tract, nearly the whole of which is irrigated by an elaborate system of canals, extends south of the railway to the foot of the plateau.

THE KAIMUR HILLS.

The third region is the hilly country, called the Kaimur plateau, which comprises about 800 square miles and extends along the southern boundary of the district in an undulating table-land, which at Rohtāsgarh attains the height of 1,490 feet above the sea. Much of this tract is covered with rock and jungle and is incapable of cultivation; it is unprotected by irrigation, the soil yields poor and precarious crops, and the population is very sparse. The boundaries of the hills, though well defined, are very irregular and often indented by the deep gorges scoured out by hill streams. Rising abruptly from the plains, their sides present sheer precipices with masses of débris at their feet; while their summits simulate a table-land broken by scores of saucer-shaped valleys, each a few miles in diameter, with a rich deposit of vegetable mould in the centre, which produces excellent rice crops. They are an offshoot of the great Vindhyan range and have been described in the records of the Geological Survey as follows:—

"The escarpments are everywhere lofty and bold, and the high lands west of Rohtās have an elevation varying from 1,000

to 1,400 feet. Their surface is uneven, being rocky, and covered with thick forest jungle; amongst the glades feed herds of cattle, which form the chief wealth of the inhabitants. The drainage, which here as elsewhere is thrown north by the Vindhyan crest, falls by a series of waterfalls into the long winding gorges, which convey it to the alluvial plains of the Ganges.

"The most prominent features of the Vindhyan area are the numerous escarpments, which stamp it with a geographical character peculiarly its own. The commonest form, where the lower portion of the scarp is shale, and the upper sandstone, exhibits an undercliff of about 30° inclination, with a vertical precipice above, the relative dimensions depending chiefly on the ratio of shale to sandstone. When the latter is absent, the scarp preserves a uniform slope from top to bottom; while the boldest precipices are found where the scarp is entirely sandstone, the undercliff being then made up of a *talus* from above. Along some lines of scarp, outlying hills are very frequent, whose elevation is equal to, or greater than, that of the main scarp, according as the stratification is perfectly horizontal or dips gently from the spur. On such eminences, either wholly or semi-detached, have been constructed the hill forts which once played a prominent part in Indian history.

"The gorges, which receive the rivers after their descent from the plateau, should also be mentioned in a description of the physical aspect of the country. After a clear drop of two to six hundred feet, the water plashes into a deep pool, scooped out by its continual falling, on leaving which it runs through a channel obstructed throughout several miles of its course with huge masses of rock fallen from above. From each side of the stream rise the undercliffs of the escarpment, covered with jungle and tangled débris, and crowned by vertical precipices."

The plateau was long the shelter of aboriginal tribes, and even to this day it has not been thoroughly explored and is but little known. To the Afghān followers of Mustafā Khān who fled there after their defeat by the forces of Alī Vardi Khān, in 1744, the hills seemed "a country infested with myriads of snakes and ants," in which they existed "like men buried alive" they complained bitterly of their misery and addressed piteous appeals to the Marāthā Raghujī Bhonsla, promising, if they were "delivered from their loathsome habitations, to addict their whole lives to his service." Even as late as 1848, Sir Joseph Hooker observed that little was known of the natural history of a great part of the plateau and that a native tribe, prone to human sacrifices, was talked of. These hills are now, however, much less

wild than in former times. Many of the larger trees have been cut down, and the shallow fertile valleys have been cleared and cultivated. The hill sides are also much used for pasturage, and in the hot weather large herds of cattle find food and shelter in their shady glades when scarcely a blade of grass is to be seen in the scorched plains at their feet. The cattle are driven up by several *ghāts* or ascents, some of which are also practicable for beasts of burden. Two of the most frequented of these passes are those known as Sarkī and Khariyarī,—the first near the south-western boundary, the second in the deep gorge north of Rohtās. Two passes on the north side, however, are more accessible—one two miles south of Sasarām, known as Khulā or Ghorā *ghāt*, and the other at Chhanpathar, at the extreme west of the district, where the Karamnāsā forms a waterfall; while two other *ghāts*, the Saksakwā leading to Rohtās and the ascent to the west of Shergarh, have been realigned and their gradients made practicable for traffic. The Barap *ghāt* near Pīpra, though used by beasts of burden, is at one point very dangerous, as there is only a narrow track with the abrupt side of the hill rising perpendicularly above it on one side, and a steep precipice on the other; the path runs over smooth and slippery sandstone, and a false step may send both man and beast headlong down the precipice.

As might be expected, the temperature on the top is appreciably lower than that of the valley—about 5 degrees—and its extremes are much less marked than in the plains. Sir Joseph Hooker, who visited Rohtāsgarh in 1848, was struck with the difference between the table-land and the valley below, and wrote as follows:—"The climate of the whole neighbourhood has of late changed materially, and the fall of rain has much diminished consequent on felling the forests; even within six years the hailstorms have been far less frequent and violent." The great want on the plateau is good water, which only exists at a few places. In the rains there is abundance; but during the cold and hot weather the inhabitants are sometimes put to great difficulties to obtain a proper supply.

RIVER SYSTEM. The district of Shāhābād occupies the angle formed by the junction of the Son with the Ganges, but neither of these rivers anywhere crosses the boundary. It is also watered by several minor streams, which all rise among the Kaimur hills and flow north towards the Ganges. The most noteworthy of the rivers flowing past or in the district are described below.

The Ganges. The Ganges forms the northern boundary of the district, separating it from Ghāzīpur, Ballia and Sāran. It first touches Shāhābād near Chausā, where it is joined by the Karamnāsā, and

then flows in a north-easterly direction past Buxar, as far as Ballia, where it bends to the south-east. At Sapahī it again turns to the north-east until nearly opposite Haldī, where it assumes an easterly course, which it keeps until it leaves the district at the confluence of the Son. Its tributaries from the south are the Karamnāsā, Thorā, Jhurī, Gangi and Son, of which the first and last alone deserve separate mention. The Ganges in this portion of its course is constantly changing its bed, and large tracts are annually formed by alluvion; these sometimes become permanent, but are as often swept away the following year. The description of this part of Bihār by the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsiang, who visited India in the 7th century, shows that the river formerly flowed much farther to the south than at present. The town of Masār, which is stated by him to have been situated close to the Ganges, is now 9 miles away, but the high bank of the old bed still exists and can easily be traced past Buxar, Bhojpur, Belauti, Bihiā, Arrah and Koelwār. Since 1860 a reverse movement has begun to take place, and the vast river bed is gradually working to the south.

In the Buxar sub-division the banks, which are of hard gravel, are generally steep and abrupt, as the current strikes against them; but lower down, where the stream is deflected against the opposite bank, they are sloping. In many places they are composed of a schistose clay, which has an appearance similar to that of sandstone, but crumbles away very readily. The breadth of the stream in the dry season is generally about three-quarters of a mile, but in the rains it is many times wider. A large through trade is carried on, both up and down stream, but the only places of any importance on the south bank are Buxar and Chausā.

The Son rises, near the sources of the Narbadā and Mahānadī, on the elevated plateau of Central India. After a course of 325 miles through a high rocky tract, it enters this district at Kosderā near Jadunāthpur, and flowing by the steep slopes and precipices of the Kaimur range, debouches upon the Gangetic valley at Akbarpur. It then runs a straight course of 100 miles through the plains of South Bihār, and finally joins the sacred river 10 miles north of Maner midway between Arrah and Dinapore. During this portion of its course it attains a great width, which generally exceeds 2 miles, and opposite Tilothu amounts to 3 miles; and another peculiarity of these lower reaches is the height of the eastern bank, where the strong westerly winds which prevail from January till the breaking of the rains in June heap up the sand from the river bed to a height of 12 or 14 feet

The Son.

above the level of the country, thus forming a natural embankment for many miles.

The Son nowhere enters the district, but bounds it for 145 miles on the south and east. It first touches on Shāhābād near Kosderā, a place about 440 feet above the sea, and after gradually curving round the Kaimur hills on the west, flows by Akbarpur 40 feet lower. Proceeding to the south, it passes Dehrī, Hariharganj, Nanaur and Koelwār, where the East Indian Railway crosses it on a fine lattice girder bridge; and finally it falls into the Ganges opposite Dariāganj in Sāran. Opposite Hankārpur it is joined by the river Koel from Palāmau, and at Dehrī it is crossed by the massive masonry dam which supplies a head for the Son Canals, and by the great bridge over which runs the Mughalsarai-Gayā section of the East Indian Railway. The most noticeable features of this portion of its course are its meagre stream of water at ordinary times as compared with the enormous breadth of the river bed, its vast size and its paroxysmal violence at periods of flood. Seen in the dry season, about April or May, the bed presents a wide stretch of drifting sand with an insignificant stream of water, barely 100 yards wide, meandering from bank to bank, and fordable in most places. But in the rainy season, and especially just after a storm has burst on the plateau of Central India, the river presents an extraordinary contrast. It drains a hill area of 21,300 square miles, *i.e.*, a tract about four times as extensive as the district of Shāhābād; the entire rainfall of this enormous catchment basin requires to find an outlet by this channel; and after heavy rain the river rises with incredible rapidity. The channel frequently proves unable to carry off the total flood discharge, amounting to 830,000 cubic feet per second, and the flood waters rush down so violently as to spill over its broad bed and cause disastrous inundations in the low-lying plains of Shāhābād. These heavy floods are, however, of short duration, hardly ever lasting more than four days, after which the river rapidly sinks to its usual level.

The Son receives no tributaries of any importance from the point where it enters the district up to Dehrī, where its waters are distributed east to the Gayā and Patna districts and west to Shāhābād through the great irrigation system of the Son Canals; and between Dehrī and its junction with the Ganges the drainage sets away from it, so that no stream can join it north of that place. Old beds are numerous, but they are principally found on the eastern bank in the districts of Gayā and Patna. One such bed, however, runs in this district from Telkap; it is very

obscurely marked, but apparently rejoins the present channel at the depression near Amiāwar, a short distance south of Nāsriganj. Of late years the Son has shifted its course a little, and several villages, 3 miles north of Koelwār, have been swept away, while accretions have formed on the opposite bank.

The bed of the Son consists almost entirely of sand; but in a few parts clay is found and cultivated. Nodular limestone is obtained in several places; and the trial wells sunk during the construction of the Koelwār bridge disclosed a thick stratum of that substance below the sand. Below the junction of the Koel a species of small pebbles or agates is found, many of which are ornamental, and take a good polish; most of them consist of silica, both opaque and diaphanous, of a reddish or dark green tinge. In the Ain-i-Akbarī the Son is said to have the power of petrifying substances thrown into it and to contain many *sāligrām* stones.

During the dry season there are many fords, but ferry boats generally ply for eight months in the year. The fall of the river bed below Akbarpur varies only from 1·75 to 2·80 feet a mile, but at several places above Dehrī rocks and rapids effectually stop river traffic. In its lower reaches also navigation is intermittent and of little commercial importance. In the rainy season native boats of large tonnage occasionally proceed for a short distance up-stream under favourable circumstances of wind and flood; but navigation is rendered dangerous by the extraordinary violence of the floods, and during the rest of the year is impossible for any but small boats owing to the small depth of water. The principal traffic is in bamboos and timber. The former are floated down, bound into rafts consisting of 10,000 or more lashed together—a tedious process in the dry weather, as they are constantly grounding, and the many windings of the stream render their progress extremely slow.

The Son possesses historical interest as being probably identical with the Erannoboas, which is mentioned by Megasthenes as "the third river in all India and inferior to none but the Indus and Ganges, into the latter of which it discharges its waters." Erannoboas appears a manifest corruption of the Sanskrit *Hiranyabāhu* or golden-armed, a name formerly given to the river and apparently derived from the ruddy-coloured sand it brings down in flood. It formerly flowed far to the east and joined the Ganges near Fatwā in Patna district; and the ancient town of Pālibothrā or Pātaliputra (corresponding to the modern Patna) was situated at its confluence with the Ganges. It has gradually receded further westwards and made

fresh channels for itself. Old river beds have been found between Bankipore and Dinapore, and Mr. Twining, who was Collector of Shāhābād in 1801-1804, mentions that in his time the river broke through the eastern bank in high flood, and, flowing along what was recognized as its old channel, inundated the cantonment of Dinapore. In the Ain-i-Akbarī it is said to have joined the Ganges at Maner, and in Rennell's Bengal Atlas of 1772 the junction is marked at the same place. In Buchanan Hamilton's time, however, the Son flowed into the Ganges 3 miles above Maner, and it now joins that river about 10 miles higher up.

The Karamnāsā.

The Karamnāsā rises on the eastern ridge of the plateau in the Kaimur hills, about 3 miles above the channel of the Son, and flows away from that river in a north-westerly direction. Near Darīhara it becomes the boundary line with Mirzāpur district, which it enters near Kuluhā. For about 15 miles it flows through Mirzāpur and then re-enters Shāhābād, again forming the boundary of the district until it falls into the Ganges near Chausā. By the end of February it generally runs dry, but during the rains boats of 50 maunds' burthen can sail up to the confluence of the Dargautī. There is a fine waterfall 100 feet high at Chhanpathar, where the river precipitates itself from the hills, and above this point its bed is rocky and its banks are abrupt; but as it debouches into the plains it spreads out to a width of 150 yards, cutting a deep bed through a rich clay very retentive of moisture.

This river is held by Hindus in the utmost abhorrence and is regarded by them as an accursed stream. To prevent the orthodox being polluted by its touch, Ahalyā Bai, the widow of Holkar, is said to have attempted to span it by a bridge, but the work was never completed and had to be abandoned; while in the *Tuzak-i-Bābari* (1590 A.D.) we are informed that when Bābar came to the river in his expedition against Bihār, the pious Hindus refused to pass it, and, in order to avoid its unholy waters, embarked in a boat and crossed by the Ganges. Its impurity is connected with the following legend:—Rājā Trisangku, of the Solar line, married the stepmother of a Brāhman whom he had murdered and was purified from his sin only by bathing in water collected by a saint from all the streams in the world; this water, still polluted by his crime, now flows from the spring in which the Karamnāsā rises. Another local legend accounts for the abhorrence of this river in a somewhat different manner. It relates how Rājā Trisangku, being anxious to ascend to heaven in his human form, went to Vasistha, his

guru or spiritual guide, and asked him to perform some religious rite by which his wish might be fulfilled. Vasistha replied that he was forbidden by the Sāstras to offer such an indignity to the gods. Rājā Trisangku went with the same request to Vasistha's sons, but they likewise rejected it, and, learning that he had not taken their father's refusal as final, cursed him and reduced him to the impure condition of a Chandāl. In this degraded state, however, he succeeded in gaining the pity and favour of another holy man, Vishwāmitra Rishi, who listened to his petition and despatched him to heaven. The gcds, incensed at his insolence and impurity, cast him head foremost down again, but as he fell he cried out for help and was stopped by Vishwāmitra in mid-air. Thereupon some saliva dropped from his mouth on the earth and formed the source of the Karamnāsā. Several other similarly absurd legends are current, but the most probable explanation of the uncleanness of this stream in Hindu eyes is that it long formed the boundary between the orthodox region of Brahmanism, whose centre was at Benares, and the heretic country of Magadha, the home of Buddhism for many centuries. There is nothing in the composition of the water itself to account for its unholiness, but no high-caste Hindu, except those who live on its banks, will even now-a-days drink or touch it. By the latter it is used freely and without a scruple for all purposes; and they have invented a simple explanation of their disregard of the ancient prejudice of their co-religionists. The word Karamnāsā is derived from the Sanskrit *Karma* (an action) and the root *nās* (to destroy), the whole word signifying the annihilation of all good deeds; but the *pandits* of its riparian villages declare that its true name was Kukarmanāsā (*Ku* meaning evil) and that its stream is purifying and destructive of bad deeds. At the present time, even the strictest Hindus do not consider any ceremony of purification necessary after touching the Karamnāsā, because the idea is that it does not in itself defile but only washes away all previous righteousness.

The Kao or Dhobā rises on the plateau six miles south-west of Tilothu, and, after flowing through a glen in a northerly direction, forms a fine waterfall, and enters the plains at the Tārāchandī pass, 2 miles south-east of Sasarām. At this place it bifurcates: one branch, the Kudra, turns to the west and ultimately joins the Karamnāsā; while the other, which preserves the name Kao, flows to the north, and finally falls into the Ganges near Gaighāt. There is very little water in its bed during the cold and hot seasons, but in the rains it is subject to floods of the The Kao.

most violent character. At Bichia it is crossed by the Main Western Canal, underneath which it is conveyed by means of a syphon of 25 arches, which has a waterway of 900 square feet and is a cause of much anxiety during freshets. In the hilly portion of its course the bed is rocky and full of enormous boulders washed down during the heavy rains. The banks are generally high and firm, but in the plains are less elevated. The river, which is nowhere navigable, except at flood-time as far as the railway line, is the principal drainage channel of the southern and central parts of the district.

The Kudra.

The Kudra, as already explained, is a branch of the Kao, and carries off the overflow of that river when it rises in flood. After leaving the Tārāchandī pass near Sasarām, it is swollen by a number of small streams, and, flowing in a north-easterly direction, crosses the Grand Trunk Road at Khurmābād, and falls into the Dargautī at Tendwā after a course of 50 miles. In the dry season it contains very little water; but during the rains a large stream passes down it. The bed is rocky and full of enormous boulders until the river has fairly debouched into the plains, after which it varies according to the character of the soil through which it passes. According to local tradition, the origin of the Kudra is as follows:—A powerful Brāhman zāmīndar, who owned large estates near Kargahar, came down with a large following to the Tārāchandī pass, and, after defeating the local levies, proceeded to excavate a new channel from the Kao river to his own domains. This channel was called the Kudra because it was excavated with *kudāris*, and it is noticeable that an old bed of the Kudra is still to be seen passing northwards towards Kargahar. Legends of this great battle still linger among the people, who say that such a vast number of Brāhmans were slain that over a maund of sacred thread was collected from their dead bodies.

The Dargautī.

The Dargautī rises in the village of Bhakmā, on the southern ridge of the Kaimur plateau, a few miles north of the Karamnāsā. For about 9 miles it pursues a northerly course, being joined by some unimportant hill streams, after which it rushes over a precipice 300 feet high into the deep glen of Kadhar Khoh, where other hill torrents help to swell its volume. After passing by the stalattite caves of Gupteswar and the hill fortress of Shergarh, it enters the plains at Karamchat and makes for Jahānābād, 8 miles north, on the Grand Trunk Road. Here it runs to the north-west, running parallel to the road for 22 miles, until it crosses it at Sāwant, where it bends towards the north-east and falls into the Karamnāsā, after receiving the Kudra from the east. The Dargautī drains an area on the plateau of

about 200 square miles. In the upper part of its course it has a rocky channel, with a clear and rapid stream not more than 30 feet wide; but, after it enters the plains, it is wider, and at Jahānābād it attains a breadth varying from 100 to 120 feet. The river-bed in the plains is sandy, mixed here and there with nodular limestone, which is largely quarried and used in repairing the Grand Trunk Road. It contains water all the year round; and during the rains boats of $1\frac{1}{2}$ ton burthen can navigate it 50 or 60 miles from its mouth.

The principal tributaries of the Dargautī are the Surā, Korā, Gonhuā and Kudra.

The Surā rises near the village of Dahār, on the plateau, and falls into the Lāl Kākānd or Red Pool, in the Mokeri pass. As it proceeds it receives a number of affluents, the principal of which are the Kandan Khoh and Jawar Khoh. It debouches on the plains 6 miles south of the town of Bhabuā, which it leaves about a mile on the east, finally falling into the Dargautī after a course of about 25 miles. Its bed is pebbly in the hills and sandy in the plains; and nodular limestone is largely quarried from it. In the rains, boats of 100 maunds' burthen can ply up to the foot of the hills. The Surā.

Throughout the greater part of the district the rocks are hidden by the alluvium of the Ganges, and, except for some small hillocks about 10 miles north of Sasarām, there are no rocks exposed north of 25° north latitude. The portion of the district situated south of that parallel, including the southern portion of the Sasarām and Bhabuā sub-divisions, is mostly a plateau bounded by steep scarps. This plateau is the easternmost termination of one of the most pronounced geographical and geological features of India, the vast area constituting the Vindhyan table-land. Of the numerous stratigraphical sub-divisions constituting the great Vindhyan system, only three are conspicuous in this district. They are, by order of superposition, the Kaimur sandstone, the Bijaigarh shales, and the Rohtās limestone. GEOLOGY.

The uppermost of these sub-divisions, the Kaimur sandstone, occupies the greatest superficies. It covers the greater portion of the table-land, and along its southern and south-western borders forms the upper portion of the precipitous escarpments that overlook the Son, while along its northern edge it constitutes the whole height of the cliffs down to their base where they meet the Ganges alluvium. The Kaimur sandstone constitutes an excellent building material, and has been largely quarried at Karaundia and Dhaudhānr near Sasarām, whence it has been conveyed to Dehri to be utilised in the works connected with the Son Canals. There

are also quarries of a very evenly-bedded rock at Pateswar, a detached hill close to the northern escarpment of the table-land, 8 miles west of Chainpur.

The Bijaigarh shales and Rothās limestone form the under-cliff facing the Son along the southern and south-eastern edge of the Kaimur outcrop, and are also seen, further north, in the deep river gorges like those of the Dargautī, where they cut through the anticlinal axes of the shallow corrugations which, striking a little north of east, help to diversify the surface of this eastern termination of the great Kaimur plateau. The Rohtās limestone, whose aggregate thickness is about 500 feet, is a very fine-grained, evenly-bedded rock, largely burnt for lime; and some of the beds can be used as lithographic stone. It is in this limestone that the sacred Gupteswar caves of the Dargautī valley are found. The Bijaigarh shales, about 150 feet thick, are intensely brittle and splintery, and are frequently so black in colour as to be easily mistaken for coal. They are often impregnated with iron pyrites and have been used to a small extent to manufacture sulphate of iron. In the Dargautī valley and the other northern inliers, as also south-east of Khadar, the Bijaigarh shales rest directly upon the Rohtās limestone, but along the southern scarp there intervene a subsidiary sandstone and shale known as the Lower Kaimur sandstone and Rohtās shale. Sometimes an additional thin band of limestone is intercalated between the Rohtās shale and Lower Kaimur sandstone.

South-west of Rohtāsgarh, in the low ground intervening between the foot of the scarp and the bank of the Son, some of the Vindhyan sub-divisions underlying the Rohtās limestone are seen for a short distance. The most interesting are some ancient volcanic beds remarkable for their porcellanic texture. The isolated low hills north of Sasarām consist of a very coarse quartzose and felspathic sandstone, containing abundant rounded pebbles of a red felspathic rock and quartz. Being surrounded on all sides by alluvium, their relations to the other rocks cannot be clearly made out; they may be the basement beds of the Vindhyan formation, or else connected with the Kaimur sandstone.*

BOTANY. The alluvial and highly-cultivated country which forms the greater portion of the district presents in its botanical features a great contrast to the wild hilly tracts to the south. In the

* The account of the geology of the district has been contributed by Mr. E. Vredenburg, Deputy Superintendent, Geological Survey of India. Further details will be found in "The Vindhyan Series" by F. R. Mallet (Memoirs of the Geological Survey of India, Vol. VII, Part I), and "The Volcanic Rocks of the Lower Vindhyan Series," by E. Vredenburg (Memoirs, Vol. XXXI, Part I).

former sugar-cane, poppy, rice and a great variety of other food-crops are extensively grown; the area under cultivation is bare or dotted over with clumps of bamboos and mango orchards; while the villages are frequently surrounded by groves of palmyra (*Borassus flabelliformis*) and date-palm (*Phœnix sylvestris*). Numerous more isolated examples of *Tamarindus*, *Odina*, *Sapindus* and *Moringa* also occur, associated with which one frequently finds in village shrubberies *Glycosmis*, *Clerodendron*, *Solanum*, *Jatropha*, *Trema*, *Streblus* and similar semi-spontaneous and more or less useful species. In the rice-fields which cover the low-lying lands near the Ganges, the usual weeds of such localities are found, such as *Ammannia*, *Utricularia*, *Hygrophila* and *Sesbania*. Further from the river a dry scrub jungle is sometimes met with, of which the principal species are euphorbiaceous shrubs, *Butea* and other leguminous trees, and various examples of *Ficus*, *Schleichera*, *Wendlandia* and *Gmelina*. The grasses clothing the drier parts are generally of a coarse character, such as *Andropogon contortus*, *aciculatus*, *annulatus*, *foveolatus* and *pertusus*, *Aristida Adscenscionis*, *Tragus racemosus*, *Iseilema laxum*, various *Anthistriæ*, and *sabai* grass (*Ischæmum angustifolium*). Throughout the alluvial country which stretches to the foot of the hills the *pīpal* (*Ficus religiosa*) and banyan (*Ficus indica*) are common; the other principal trees growing in this area are the *bel* (*Aegle Marmelos*), *nīm* (*Melia Azadirachta*), *siris* (*Mimosa Sirissa*), and jack fruit tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*).

In the Kaimur hills, which with their outlying spurs occupy the southern portion of the district, a different class of vegetation exists. Though now to a great extent denuded of their best timber, they are still largely covered with forest growth, while their slopes are densely clothed with jungle. On the plateau there is long grass, chiefly spear-grass, *kus* (*Poa cynosuroides*), the *khas-khas* (*Andropogon muricatus*), trees of *Diospyros* and *Terminalia*, and here and there the *Boswellia*; in places the curious white-barked *Sterculia fœtida* spreads over the precipitous cliffs which form its outer face; and vast stretches of bamboo cover the débris at its base. The forests consist for the most part of a mixed growth of stunted trees of no great height or girth, and though there are patches of *sāl* (*Shorea robusta*), the timber is poor and scarcely worth exporting. Among other important trees found in this area may be mentioned the *amaltās* (*Cassia Fistula*), the red cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*), the *harā* (*Terminalia Chebula*), the astringent fruit of which forms the Indian or black myrobalan, and the *tend* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) yielding the ebony of local commerce. The plateau is also rich in various

jungle products from many of which the aboriginal inhabitants obtain a livelihood; from the *khair* (*Acacia Catechu*) cutch is prepared; lac is obtained from the *palās* (*Butea frondosa*); *tasar* silkworms feed on the *āsan* tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*); the long coarse *sabai* grass is made into a strong twine; and the *kus* grass produces a fragrant oil. Perhaps, however, the most useful of all the trees which clothe the hills and the undulating slopes at their base is the *mahuā* (*Bassia latifolia*), which yields food, wine, oil and timber, and affords the denizens of the jungle a ready means of subsistence in times of dearth. From the flowers the common country spirit is distilled, and whether fresh or dried they furnish the poorer classes with wholesome food; from the fruit is pressed an oil largely used for the adulteration of *ghī*; and the tough timber is used for the naves of cart wheels.

FAUNA.

The district formerly abounded in wild animals and game-birds, but with the extension of irrigation caused by the introduction of canals they have had to give way before the advance of the cultivator, and are now only met with in the more remote parts and in ever diminishing numbers. With the exception of hyænas, black buck, wild pig and *nīlgai* (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), large game is practically confined to the Kaimur hills and the gorges which pierce the plateau in all directions. In this area tigers, bears, leopards and viverine cats, though not common, are occasionally met with; while the *koā* or wild dog, though comparatively rare, is still sometimes seen in the wilder recesses of the plateau. There are several varieties of deer; the *sāmbar* (*Cervus unicolor*) chiefly frequents the gorges of the table-land; spotted deer and black buck are met with in the plains, the former principally in the plains adjacent to the hills and the latter in large herds on the open country in the central zone of the district; and the hog deer (*Cervus axis*) is found in the jungle growth on the hills and in the glens which fringe the plateau. The habitat of the *nīlgai* is the table-land and the alluvial tract bordering on the Ganges. The other animals include wild pig, which inhabit the same tract of country as the *nīlgai*, the hyæna, found principally on the plateau and its slopes, and the jackal, fox and hare, which are common throughout the district. The fish-eating crocodile is found in the larger rivers, and the common crocodile is frequently seen and sometimes attacks human beings. Of game-birds, the barred-headed goose (*Anser indicus*) is very common, and the black-backed goose (*Sarkidornis melanotus*) and the grey goose (*Anser cinereus*) are also to be found. The other game-birds of the district include many varieties of wild duck, several kinds of teal, partridges, quail, curlews, pea-fowl and jungle-fowl.

CLIMATE. The climate of Shāhābād is generally dry and bracing. It enjoys a long cold weather, which commences early in November and ends with the close of March, when the hot weather sets in with strong west winds which blow until the end of May. Soon after this, the rainy season commences and lasts till the end of September; but as the beginning of this season occurs when a storm from the Bay of Bengal passes over Bihār, the commencement of the monsoon may be as early as the last week of May and as late as the first or second week of July.

Temperature and humidity. Owing to its distance from the sea, Shāhābād has greater extremes of climate than the south and east of the Province. Mean temperature varies from 62° in January to 90° in May, the average maximum temperature rising to 102° in the latter month. In consequence of the hot and dry westerly winds which prevail in March and April, humidity is much lower at this season than at any other times of the year and averages only 52 per cent. of saturation. With the approach of the monsoon season, the air slowly becomes more charged with moisture, and humidity remains steady at 88 per cent. throughout July and August. In September, when periods of fine weather alternate with the cloud and rain of the monsoon, humidity is lower; and, with breaks of increasing length, it gradually falls and reaches a minimum of 79 per cent. in November. There is then a slight increase partly owing to the unsettled weather caused by the cold season disturbances.

Winds. From October until May the prevailing direction of the wind is from the west; but a marked change takes place with the commencement of the monsoon, which is generally caused by the first cyclonic storm which enters from the Bay of Bengal. The flow of the moist winds from the Bay is northwards over the eastern districts of Bengal proper, but afterwards they trend to the west owing to the barrier interposed by the Himalayan range: so that after the passage of the cyclonic storms, easterly winds set in and continue with but little interruption until the middle of September, when westerly winds again become common.

Rainfall. During the months from November to May, fine dry weather with an almost entire absence of cloud and rainfall prevails; and only a fraction of an inch of rain falls monthly. In normal years the monsoon breaks in June; and the heaviest rainfall occurs in July and August, varying from 11·48 to 13·80 inches in the former and from 9·22 to 13·20 inches in the latter month. From the middle of September the monsoon current begins to fall off in strength; and if the westerly winds are stronger than usual,

the storms coming inland from the Bay of Bengal recede eastwards and rainfall is consequently deficient.

Statistics of the rainfall at the various recording stations are given below for the cold weather (November to February), the hot weather (March to May), and the rainy season (June to October). The figures shewn are the averages recorded from the earliest year in which rainfall was systematically registered up to the end of 1904 :—

STATION.	Years recorded.	November to February.	March to May.	June to October.	Annual average.
Arrah	42-45	1·83	2·41	41·81	46·05
Buxar	31	1·85	1·22	38·06	41·13
Bhabuā ...	30-31	2·20	1·45	39·70	43·35
Sasarām ...		1·67	1·47	39·46	42·60
Dehrī	17-18	1·71	1·45	40·04	43·20
Mohaniā	14-16	2·39	0·89	42·86	46·14
Basaun ...		2·49	0·51	43·21	46·21
Koāth ...		2·18	0·77	39·16	44·11
Manoharpur	9	2·40	1·13	40·56	44·09
Sikraul ...		2·28	1·11	36·00	39·39
Rāmnagar ...		1·83	0·96	40·13	42·92
Ageaon	8-9	2·14	1·05	43·19	46·38

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY.

IN prehistoric times Shāhābād was occupied by aboriginal* races, of whom the chief representatives were the Bhars, Cheros and Savars. According to a legend, current in the neighbouring district of Mirzāpur both among the Bhars and the Aryan community, a great Bhar Rājā ruled over the country near the Son from Rohtāsgarh to Rewah. This monarch, who is said to have built the fort of Rohtāsgarh, was killed by three Rājput brothers, who conspired against him and divided his kingdom among themselves. The Cheros, whom the testimony of tradition shows to have been another dominant race, were eventually conquered by the Savars or Suirs, who then held the country till in their turn they were subdued by Aryan immigrants. Traditions of the rule of these three races still linger among the people, who attribute to them the remains of various temples and fortifications. Though there is not a single known descendant of the Savars left in Shāhābād, members of the other two tribes are still found in various parts of the district; the Bhars for the most part live in the Buxar sub-division, while a few Cheros are to be seen in the recesses of the hills and in the Bihiā† *pargana* where they inhabit the reclaimed Jagdīspur jungle. Similar traditions of ancient greatness linger among other aboriginal tribes; the Kharwārs claim to have been originally settled in the hills near Rohtās, and a few survivors still obtain a precarious livelihood in the wilder portions of the plateau; while the Oraons allege that they held the country between Rohtās and Patna and thence wandered south to the jungles. They explain that Rohtās was long held by their ancestors, but was finally wrested from them by the Hindus, who surprised them at night during one of their great national festivals,

PRE-HISTORIC PEOPLES.

* For an account of the Dravidian and Kolarian place names in Shāhābād, *see* an article by the Revd. F. Hahn, J. A. S. B., Vol. LXXII, part III, No. 2, 1903.

† Mr. A. C. Fox of Jagadīspur states that, according to local tradition, the Cheros were once *rājās* who had palaces at Basaun, Dālipur and Bihiā, and formed the body-guard of Kuar Singh. They now work as coolies and wood-cutters and are one of the hardest-drinking castes in Bihār.

when the men had fallen senseless from intoxication and only women were left to fight.

EARLY HISTORY.

Coming to later times, Shāhābād was comprised, with the country now included in the districts of Patna and Gayā, in the ancient kingdom of Magadha, and formed part of the empire of Asoka; but apparently it was subject to Buddhist influences only to a very small extent. An Asoka inscription is still extant on Chandan Pīr's hill at Sasarām, and this hill is clearly an old Buddhist site; but from the general absence of Buddhist remains throughout the district it would appear that when Buddhism flourished in Magadha, it obtained no real hold over Shāhābād. When Hiuen Tsiang* made his pilgrimage to India in the 7th century A.D., the first place in Shāhābād visited by him was Mo-ho-so-lo, which has been identified with the modern village of Masār, 6 miles west of Arrah; and he left it on record that the inhabitants were all Brāhmans who did not respect the law of Buddha. The only other place which he deemed worthy of a visit was the site (identified by General Cunningham with the modern town of Arrah), where Asoka erected a stūpa and lion pillar to commemorate the conversion by Buddha of the demons of the desert who fed on the flesh and blood of men. Though he admits that there were still some priests who reverenced the doctrine of the Great Vehicle, the whole account of the Chinese pilgrim gives a melancholy impression of the decay of the Buddhist faith; the greater part of this stūpa was even then buried in the earth; the disciples of the unbelievers had endeavoured to remove the stone on which Buddha preached to the demons; and not far off there were many *sangharāmas* which were mostly in ruins. Of the subsequent history of the district until the Muhammadan invasion we have but little knowledge. From the evidence of inscriptions we learn that it was included within the empire of the Gupta dynasty; an inscription found at the Mundeswarī temple refers to Udyasena as the ruling chief (635 A.D.); another inscription at Deo Barunārak records the dedication of the temple by Jīvita Gupta of the later Gupta dynasty; and it may safely be inferred that Shāhābād continued to form part of their monarchy and to be subject to civilizing influences.

On the downfall of the Gupta dynasty, the Aryan lords of the country, weakened by internecine strife, were unable to hold it and gave way to the aborigines. Shāhābād, which still had only a very small Aryan population, relapsed into barbarism and anarchy, and again came under the sway of a number of petty aboriginal

* Beal, Vol. II, pp. 63-65.

chiefs. The ruling indigenous tribe at this period was the Chero, and apparently the chieftains of this race ruled over the country until they were driven southwards by the inroads of immigrant Rājputs. The latter came from Ujjain in Mālwā under the leadership of Rājā Bhoj, and after a long conflict subdued the aboriginal inhabitants of the district. The struggle lasted for hundreds of years, but eventually it terminated in favour of the Rājputs, and the Cheros were expelled and sought refuge in the hills. In these wild tracts, however, they long held their own and maintained a certain measure of independence under their native chieftains. The legends of the Cheros relate that they invaded Palāmau from Rohtās and conquered the country with the aid of Rājput chiefs, the ancestors of the Thākuras of Rankā and Chainpur; while in the *Tārikh-i-Sher Shāhi** we find a mention of a chief, Mahārta Chero, against whom Sher Shāh sent one of his generals, Khawās Khān, with orders to cut down his jungle fastnsss and utterly destroy him. The power of this chief appears to have been considerable; it is said in the *Makhzan-i-Afghānī* that he used to descend from his hills and jungles and harass the tenants round Bihār, and that he entirely closed the road to Gaur and Bengal; great importance was attached to his final defeat by Khawās Khān; and his destruction is mentioned in the *Wākiāt-i-Mushtāki* as one of the three great works accomplished by Sher Shāh.

On the conquest of Bihār by Muhammad Bakhtiyār Khiljī in 1193 A.D., Shāhābād was in the hands of petty Rājput chieftains, none of whom were sufficiently powerful to offer any resistance to his arms; with the other border districts it passed under the rule of the Muhammadans, and its history became merged in that of the *sūbah* or sub-province of which it formed a part. In 1397 it was attached to the kingdom of Jaunpur with the rest of Bihār, but a century later it was again taken possession of by the Emperors of Delhi; and the next mention of the district in the Muhammadan chronicles occurs in connection with the rise of Sher Shāh to power. As a reward for his services in the conquest of Jaunpur, Jamāl Khān, the Sūbahdār of that Province, granted the father of Sher Shāh, an Afghān adventurer named Hasan Khān, the *pargana* of Sasarām as a *jāgīr*; but even at this late date the Muhammadans do not appear to have held the district with a firm hand and, so far as can be gathered, it was subjugated rather in name than in fact. The allegiance of the people was very loose, the zamīndārs were practically independent

MUHAMMADAN PERIOD.

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* Elliot's History of India, Vol. IV.

and refused to pay revenue, and it required strong coercive measures on the part of Sher Shāh to bring them to order.

Bābar's invasion.

When Bābar invaded Bihār in 1529 in order to reduce its Afghān rulers, Sher Shāh ranged himself against the Imperial forces; but Bābar quickly defeated the allied chiefs, and local tradition points to a spot in Arrah town as the place where the Emperor pitched his camp after his victory and celebrated his assumption of sovereignty over Western Bihār. Bābar's naive account of his campaign is full of incidents of personal, if not of historical, interest. A close observer, he notices the superstition of the Hindus with regard to the Karamnāsā, and we learn that the Hindus of his army made a detour by the Ganges rather than touch its polluting water. While the issue of the campaign is still undecided, he finds time to ride out from his camp near Arrah to see the beds of water lilies and to taste their seeds, which, in his estimation, resembled the pistachio nut. He does not forget to tell us how in the preceding year he swam the Ganges at Buxar, and how finding the Son was near, he rode on to see the tombs of Maner and to say his prayers at noon in the mosque. Even when attacked by the Bengali army, he seems to have been more gratified at seeing how they worked the artillery for which they were famous than indignant at their treachery; and he remarks with the utmost gravity that their method was to fire at random and never to take aim.

Sher Shāh.

On the death of Bābar, Sher Shāh became supreme on the borders of Bengal and soon effected the conquest of that Province. In 1537 Humāyūn advanced against him, and after a siege of 6 months reduced his fortress of Chunār; on this Sher Shāh shut himself up in Rohtāsgarh, which he had succeeded in capturing a short time previously, and made no effort to oppose his advance. Humāyūn spent 6 months of dissipation in Bengal, and then finding that Sher Shāh had cut off his communications and that his brothers at Delhi would not come to his assistance, retraced his steps. He was met by Sher Shāh's army at Chausā near Buxar and was utterly defeated: the Emperor himself escaped by swimming the Ganges with the help of a *massak* or water-bag, but 8,000 of his followers perished in attempting to follow him. This victory secured to Sher Shāh the throne of Delhi, and on his death he was buried at Sasarām in the magnificent mausoleum which he had built for himself.

Mughal Sūbahdārs.

After the accession of Akbar, his viceroy, Mān Singh, selected Rohtāsgarh as his stronghold, and steps were taken to organize the administration, the land revenue of the district, which was at that time inclubed in *sarkār* Rohtas, being fixed at

Rs. 10,22,000. In spite, however, of the possession of this fortress, the Mughal Emperors had but little hold over the greater part of the district; and under Akbar and his successors, the local chieftains were in a constant state of rebellion,* which was only suppressed by the strong forces sent against them. The Rājās of Jagdīspur resisted the Mughal armies for years until the unequal combat led to their entire destruction; and another chieftain, the Rājā of Bhojpur, also defied the Emperor, till he too was defeated and imprisoned. When Akbar at length set him at liberty on the payment of an enormous ransom, he again armed and continued in rebellion under Jahāngīr. This rising was not finally quelled till, Bhojpur having been sacked, his successor, Rājā Pratāb, was executed by Shāh Jahān, while the Rānī was forced to marry a Muhammadan courtier.

The zamīndārs of Bhojpur long retained an independent position and considerable power, and the author of the Sair-ul-Mutākharin refers to them as "bad men to a proverb," "famous both for their number and depredations as well as for their refractory temper." We learn that "to their unbounded influence in their own extensive possessions they joined connections of long standing with the independent zamīndārs and princes on the other side of the mountainous country"; and their subjugation became at last a matter of administrative necessity. Finally, the Governor of Bihār was sent by his uncle, Alī Vardi Khān, against these semi-independent chiefs; and setting out at the head of a strong army and train of artillery, he succeeded in crushing them (1740-41 A.D.). "Few of the merchants of the district," we are told, "few of its inhabitants had not felt their exactions, and hardly any traveller could venture to pass through their lands without being stripped and, in case of resistance, murdered. It would require a volume to enumerate the many violences and the many extortions they were perpetually putting into practice against all mankind. At last, after two engagements that cost much blood, and two sieges that consumed much time, the refractory zamīndārs were driven from their strongholds, their castles and habitations were destroyed, and the country was freed from their incursions and eternal violence. The young Viceroy having rid himself of these troublesome oppressors turned his views towards quieting the country, tranquillizing the minds of the husbandmen, establishing a revenue, and resuscitating the finances."

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* *See* Notes from Muhammadan historians, by H. Blochmann, J. A. S. B., Vol. XL, Part I, 1871.

RISE OF THE BRITISH POWER.

During the troubled times which witnessed the decay of the Mughal empire and the rise of the British power, the district was frequently overrun by contending armies. Mustafā Khān, the rebellious general of Alī Vardi Khān, retreated there in 1744 at the head of his Afghān followers, with the firm assurance that he would obtain the ready support of its disaffected zamīndārs. A pitched battle ensued at Jagdīspur against the forces of the Governor of Bihār, which ended in the defeat of the rebel general's troops and his own death. Many of his officers and followers fled to the hills near Sasarām, from which all exit was barred by the local zamīndārs, and thence addressed piteous appeals to the Marāthā Raghujī Bhonsla to come to their rescue. The Marāthā, seeing the policy of attaching to his cause some thousand tried Afghān soldiers, set out from Bīrbhūm and, having forded the Son, went into the hills of Sasarām (1745 A.D.). After effecting a junction with the Afghāns, he descended to the plains with an army which, after this addition to its strength, numbered 20,000 horse, and then retired to Arwal. In 1758 Sasarām again saw the passage of a large army. The Shāhzāda or Imperial Prince, known afterwards as the Emperor Shāh Alam, who had been appointed by his father Sūbahdār of Bengal, Bihār and Orissa, had invaded Bihār with a mixed army of Afghāns and Marāthās in order to establish his claims to the Province. He had already invested Patna, when the approach of Clive with a small force of 450 Europeans and 2,500 sepoys forced the Mughal army to beat a hurried retreat to Sasarām. Thence the Shāhzāda moved his forces to the banks of the Dargautī, where he was joined by Pahlwān Singh, the powerful zamīndār of Sasarām and Chainpur; and soon afterwards he crossed the Karamnāsā. Clive,* who had recently been made Governor of all the Company's settlements in Bengal, thereupon marched from Patna against Pahlwān Singh, but that chieftain refused to give battle, and, after an interview with Clive at Sasarām, came to terms and disbanded his troops.

One of the earliest measures of Mīr Kāsim after being invested with the Nawābship was to establish his power over this part of his dominions, and with this object he marched in 1762 with a large force to Sasarām, which he made his head-quarters. No resistance, however, was offered to him; Pahlwān Singh and the other disaffected zamīndārs of Bhojpur fled the country and took refuge with Shujā-ud-daula; and the Nawāb took possession

* Sair-ul-Mutākharin, Vol. II, p. 329.

of their lands, placed his own collectors in each zamīndāri, and supported them by strong bodies of troops. Mīr Kāsim remained some time at Sasarām, visited Rohtāsgarh, and then returned to Monghyr after taking measures to secure the tranquillity of the country. He put Shāh Mal, the Dīwān of Rohtāsgarh, in irons, imprisoned the Kilādār or commandant of the garrison, and left bodies of troops in various parts of the district. One officer was placed in command of Sasarām and Chainpur; his pay-master was stationed at Bhojpur with a whole brigade of horse and foot; and, lastly, the infamous Somru held Buxar with a few regiments of sepoys and some field-pieces. In the Sair-ul-Mutākharin we find a brief notice of Somru's management of Buxar, which is worthy of mention as giving an insight into both the state of the country and the methods of the man who was guilty of the massacre of the English at Patna. According to this account, "Somru, who as the chief man of the country, had a right to a portion of the booties made by those famous banditti of the Bhojpur country, invited them all to an entertainment before the fort of Buxar; and as they all came whilst he was exercising a regiment of sepoys, he made them load with ball, and falling at once with fixed bayonets upon those miscreants, he put them all to death to the number of six hundred."

Subsequently, after his defeat at Udhuā Nullah and the capture of Patna by the English in 1763, Mīr Kāsim fell back on Tilothu, and having been joined there by his zanāna, who brought with them the treasure he had left in Rohtāsgarh, he fled through Sasarām to the dominions of the Nawāb of Oudh. On his return with Shujā-ud-daula in 1764, Shāhābād was the first to suffer from the ravages of the invading army, which, we are told, burned and plundered to the distance of 5 or 6 *kos* in every direction, and did not leave a trace of population throughout the country they traversed. After his repulse at Patna, Shujā-ud-daula fell back to Buxar, where he strongly entrenched himself; and it was here in October 1764 that Major Monro advanced against him and won the decisive battle which finally made the British masters of the Lower Provinces of Bengal.

The English were not left long in peaceable possession of the district, as Chait Singh, the Rājā of Benares, who had for some time been disaffected, finally broke out in open rebellion in 1781. Chait Singh's dominions included a large tract in Shāhābād, as his father, Balwant Singh, had seized the north-western portion of the district in order to consolidate his power and establish a strategical basis on the south of the Ganges. With this object

Chait Singh's rebellion.

he annexed in 1754 the large *pargana* "Keyra Mugror," which then appertained to Shāhābād, and occupied it with an overpowering force of his own troops and a large contingent of Marāthā cavalry; and in 1758 with the help of Somru he captured the fort of Seringah, 4 miles south of Chausā, and expelled the Ujjain chief of the Bhojpur family from that part of the country. The power of Chait Singh thus extended up to Buxar; and for several years before his final revolt the English garrison were practically confined to the walls of the fort. As early as 1778 the zamīndārs in the neighbourhood of Buxar gave out publicly that the English would not long retain the country, and got possession of two 24-pounders which had been sunk in a boat on its way to Chunār, saying that the English would not need them but they themselves would. In 1779 attacks were frequently made on the sepoys and servants of the officers at Buxar, when they ventured into Chait Singh's country; the Buxar *chaudhri*, who had the temerity to cross the river, was put in irons for 19 days and made to pay a fine; and no redress for these grievances could be obtained from the officers of the Rāja. His agents were constantly employed in tampering with the fidelity of the sepoys of the garrison, and many of them deserted and took service with him. When Warren Hastings finally proceeded by river to Benares in 1781, Chait Singh met him at Buxar, accompanied by a fleet carrying 2,000 armed men; while the country along both banks of the Ganges was occupied by masses of troops belonging to the Rājā, who was prepared, if necessary, to overcome the slender retinue of the Governor-General. The interview, however, passed off quietly; and Chait Singh afterwards sought Warren Hastings in his pinnace, and throwing himself at his feet professed the deepest repentance for the past and perfect resignation to his commands. When Chait Singh rose in revolt shortly afterwards, there was little actual fighting in Shāhābād. Major Crawfurd marched with his regiment from Sherghāti to Akbarpur, where he cut a road and dragged his guns up the Kaimur plateau; Bikramājīt Singh, the Rājā of Bhojpur, and his relative Bhup Nārāyan of Jagdīspur, each raised and equipped a body of trpoos and marched with him; and though large forces of the rebels occupied the hills, Crawfurd succeeded in getting through without molestation to Bijaigarh, where he had been directed to proceed in order to intercept Chait Singh's troops from Rāmnagar.

THE MUTINY.

Shāhābād has thenceforth had an uneventful history broken only by the Mutiny of 1857, when it again became the arena of more than one sanguinary conflict. The army was largely recruited from Shāhābād, and here, as in Oudh, the sepoys found

sympathy and support; Kuar Singh, the powerful zamīndār of Jagdīspur, declared in their favour; and it required a long and tedious campaign to stamp out the rising in the district. It was overrun by Kuar Singh and the mutineers from Dinapore immediately after the outbreak at that station; and Arrah, with its jail broken open, its convicts released and its treasury plundered, was the scene of a defence which is one of the most stirring episodes of the Mutiny (*vide* article on Arrah town). The mutinous sepoy regiments who had risen at Dinapore made straight for Shāhābād with a force 2,000 strong, and, being joined by Kuar Singh and his levies, they marched on Arrah. The small band of Europeans stationed there shut themselves up in their little fortress with a faithful force of 50 Sikhs, and there held out for a long eight days. A relieving party of 415 officers and men headed by Captain Dunbar proceeded in a steamer from Dinapore to their rescue; but the attempt only ended in miserable failure. They were landed at the nearest point to Arrah, and pushing on through the night, they succeeded in getting almost into the suburbs of the town by midnight without meeting any of the enemy. They appear to have been confident that their advance would not be opposed; although the moon had set at eleven o'clock and it was pitch dark, no scouts were sent forward; and marching carelessly on they fell blindly into an ambuscade. Suddenly a tremendous fire was poured in on them from a thick mango-grove by the side of the road; Dunbar himself fell with a large number of his men at the first volley; and the survivors fired helplessly into space or into one another. At last, an officer got hold of a bugler and had the assembly called in a field close by. Here the men gathered together and found some shelter in a small tank, but their white summer uniforms made them an easy target for the mutineers, who, concealing themselves behind walls and trees, were safe from the random fire of the Europeans and shot them down at their leisure. At daybreak it was decided to retire to the river from which they had started, but the retreat soon degenerated into a rout. For a long 15 miles they struggled on under a hot fire, as the ditches, jungle, houses, and in fact all the places of cover along the road were lined with the rebels. Man after man dropped down; they could see no enemy, only puffs of smoke; and when the troops tried to charge, the mutineers, safe in ambush, laughed at their impotent rage. At last, they reached the river, only to find their boats stranded; and the exhausted soldiers had to stand huddled on the bank, exposed to the pitiless fire of their pursuers until they could be got off. Many were shot as they tried to cross the stream;

others, who plunged in to escape the enemy's fire, were drowned; and only a sorry remnant reached the steamer which was waiting to carry them back to Dinapore. Had not the ammunition of the insurgents run short, hardly a man would have escaped; and, as it was, out of the 415 men who left Dinapore, 150 were killed, and of the survivors only about 50 escaped unwounded. But disastrous as was their retreat, it was redeemed by individual acts of heroism. Mr. Ross Mangles, of the Indian Civil Service, carried a wounded soldier the last 5 miles of the way till he reached the stream, and then swam with his helpless burden to a boat. Mr. McDonell of the same service was in a boat which drifted helplessly back into the bank every time it was pushed off, as the rebels had taken away the oars and lashed the rudder. The thirty-five soldiers in the boat were sheltered from fire by the usual thatch covering, but while the rudder was fixed, they remained at the mercy of the enemy. At this crisis, McDonell, though himself wounded, stepped out of the shelter, climbed on to the roof of the boat, perched himself on the rudder, and cutting the lashings under a hail of bullets, succeeded in getting the boat under way. Both these civilians received the Victoria Cross as a reward for their bravery.

In the meantime, the little garrison at Arrah, who had listened eagerly to the sound of firing, and, hearing it die away, knew that the attempt to relieve them had failed, gallantly held out against the hordes which invested their diminutive fortress. Help, however, was soon to come from an unexpected source. Major Vincent Eyre of the Bengal Artillery, while steaming up the Ganges with his horse battery of 6 guns and a company of European gunners, touched at Buxar *en route* for Ghāzīpur, and heard that the Europeans at Arrah were besieged. He immediately landed, and taking with him 150 men of the 5th Fusiliers, a few mounted volunteers, and three guns with 34 artillery men, started for Arrah on the 30th July. Rain had been falling for some weeks, and the country was well nigh impassable; the guns had to be drawn by bullocks taken from the plough; and slow progress was made. On the 1st August the dismal tidings came from Dinapore that the detachment sent to relieve Arrah had been repulsed with the loss of half their number; but Eyre determined to push on, and after 2 days' hard marching he arrived at Bībīganj, where the enemy had destroyed a bridge over a deep stream, which forced him to make a flank movement to get clear of the railway embankment. Here, at Gujrājganj, he met the forces of Kuar Singh, and after a sharp engagement dispersed them with a bayonet charge. They never

rallied; and Eyre marched straight into Arrah, where he arrived on the morning of the 3rd August, and relieved the little garrison. After resting his men, he determined to pursue the old Rājput to his jungle fastness at Jagdīspur. Having been reinforced by 200 men of the 10th Foot and 100 of Rattray's Sikhs, Eyre marched from Arrah, and on the 11th August arrived before Jagdīspur, where the rebel chief had stored a vast amount of grain, enough, it is said, to feed an army of 20,000 men for six months, and had also established a manufactory of arms and ammunition. After some jungle-fighting, the stronghold was captured; the grain was redistributed among the villagers from whom it had been forcibly taken; and the principal buildings were blown up. Kuar Singh himself fled towards Sasaram, with some mutineers of the 40th Regiment, and then passed on to Bāndā, Cawnpore and Lucknow.

In April 1858, however, defeated at Azīmgarh and himself wounded and dying, he again crossed into Shāhābād and took shelter at Jagdīspur; the British detachment which marched against him from Arrah suffered a disastrous repulse with the loss of guns and ammunition; and though Kuar Singh himself died a few days afterwards, his followers maintained their footing in the district under his brother Amar Singh. Reinforced not only from across the Ganges but also from the discontented sepoy population of the district itself, hopeless of ultimate success and thereby rendered more desperate, aided by its position in dense jungles and the intense heat of the sun, the rebel force long held its ground under the bold and determined leadership of Amar Singh, and resisted all attempts at dislodgement. Marauding bands scoured the country; and on account of its exposed state, the establishment at Arrah had to be moved to Buxar on the abandonment of Gorakhpur. Sasarām was attacked and plundered by 2,000 of the insurgents; Rohtās and its neighbourhood were infested by a considerable force of mutineers; and another rebel leader with a band of Bhojpur men openly made grants to his followers and gave out that the British rule was at an end. The extensive jungles round Jagdīspur afforded the rebels a safe refuge, and discharged sepoys and bad characters from the surrounding districts swelled their numbers; but their rule was one of terror, and they maintained their position and obtained supplies by a system of uncompromising severity and barbarity. The following account, which has been condensed from Holmes' History of the Indian Mutiny, gives a description of the last stand made by the insurgents and of their final subjugation.

On hearing the news of the defeat of the Arrah force at Jagdispur, General Sir Edward Lugard hastened to Shāhābād from Azimgarh and at once began to make the most strenuous efforts to subdue the rebels. His great difficulty was to get at them. The jungle, through which they could easily thread their way, offered a serious obstacle to the movements of his unwieldy columns. His soldiers, therefore, working like coolies in the suffocating heat, cut roads through the tangled maze. Again and again they brought parties of the rebels to action, and invariably defeated them. But the rebels ran away as often as they were attacked, and simply did their best to annoy their opponents by doing as much damage and making as great a disturbance as they could. By the middle of June Lugard was so exhausted by the hardships, the fatigue, and the anxiety which he had undergone, that he was obliged to resign his command and go home.

All through the sweltering summer months the wretched struggle dragged on. Douglas, who succeeded Lugard, had 7,000 men under his command, and he spared neither himself nor them; but it was all that he could do to keep the insurrection within bounds; the country was so sodden by the rains that operations on a large scale were for the time impossible; and he was obliged to wait until the return of the dry season should enable him to execute his plans for hunting down his enemies. Yet he could give his weary soldiers no rest; for the Grand Trunk Road had to be guarded, and numerous petty expeditions had to be undertaken. The men of one regiment were so ill that they could hardly eat or sleep; and the most robust suffered from the alternation of scorching suns and drenching showers. Meanwhile the rebels were practically masters of Shāhābād. Breaking up into small parties, they roamed over the country, maintaining themselves by plunder, and wreaking savage vengeance on all who refused to help them. One party made a raid upon Gayā, burst open the gaol, and released the prisoners. Another swooped down upon Arrah, and fired a number of bungalows. Placards appeared, offering rewards for the heads of the English officials. At last, however, the time came for Douglas to execute his plan. Dividing his force into seven columns, he arranged that four should move from Buxar, driving the rebels before them towards Jagdīspur, and with a fifth, which was in the neighbourhood of Sasarām, form a connected line from the Ganges to the Son, and thus hem in the western and southern sides of the jungle, while two others should hem it in on the east. As the Ganges bounded it on the north, the rebels would be compassed in on every side, and must surrender.

On the 13th of October the columns began to move, and every hour the ring within which the rebels were confined became smaller. On the 15th all the columns were within a short distance of the jungle; and Douglas issued orders to his commanders to close simultaneously on to it. But one column was delayed for some hours by a sudden inundation; and the rebels, promptly seizing the opportunity, rushed out of the jungle, and struck eastwards with the object of crossing the Son.

Major Sir Henry Havelock then suggested that the one way to neutralize the advantage which the rebels derived from their superior speed would be to pursue them with mounted infantry armed with Enfield rifles, who would be able to overtake them and keep them engaged until a supporting force should come up and annihilate them. Douglas approved of the idea, and at 8 o'clock on the night of the 18th, Havelock set out from the neighbourhood of Jagdispur with 60 mounted infantry, under orders to make for Arrah, and thence move up the left bank of the Son. A force of cavalry followed him; and at 10 o'clock an infantry column was despatched, and pursued a course parallel with and north of the rebels' line of flight. Douglas himself, with another infantry column, marched for Arrah at daybreak. Within a few hours the rebels found themselves headed, and turned round and fled southwards. Their pursuers dogged them. The country was flooded, and the mounted infantry were up to their saddles in water; but the rebels were going at a terrific pace, and, though the horses rapidly became exhausted, the chase had to be maintained. On the afternoon of the following day, Havelock overtook the rear-guard of the fugitives, drove them into a village, and shut them up in it until an infantry column came up to his aid. Three hundred of the rebels were soon destroyed. Two hundred more darted out of the village, and made a desperate effort to rejoin their comrades, but were hunted down, and shot or sabred. The main body fled on, doubling again and again like hares. Still the mounted infantry kept up the chase; but numbers of horses dropped down dead, and every villager whom Havelock questioned about the direction which the fugitives had taken lied. On the evening of the 23rd he got within a few hundred yards of them; but the horses were too tired to be able to pass them; and though sorely harassed by the rifles of their pursuers, they succeeded in escaping into the Kaimur hills.

But there was still no rest for them or for the British. It was an axiom of the Commander-in-Chief that no district could be regarded as subdued while a single armed rebel remained within

it. He therefore ordered Douglas to dislodge the fugitives from their new asylum. The undertaking involved extraordinary toil and hardship. The hills were covered with dense jungle and huge boulders, which greatly impeded the progress of the columns. In many places the ground was so slippery that the baggage animals fell down. Still Douglas persevered. At midnight on the 24th of November, he saw fires burning some way off in the jungle. As silently as deer-stalkers the troops kept along till, when they were within 50 yards of the fires, a few figures rose and moved off. The troops charged. The rebels stole down the hills, entered the plains, and tried to cross the Ganges. But the captains of some steamers which were patrolling the river opened fire upon them, and sent them flying from the bank. Their spirit was now at last broken. They no longer attempted to preserve their organization. The leaders fled for their lives. The rest skulked off by twos and threes to their homes; and, before the close of the year, peace was restored to the land.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

Shāhābād presents a great contrast to the neighbouring district of Gayā in the absence of the Buddhist images and temples which are so numerous in that part of ancient Magadha. In the greater part of the Gayā district collections of ancient statuary, grouped under the village *pīpal* tree and frequently including Buddhist sculptures, are a common sight; but as soon as the Son is crossed, they almost entirely disappear, and with the exception of the Asoka inscription at Sasarām, there is a noticeable absence of Buddhist remains. Ancient Hindu relics are almost as rare, the oldest building being the Mundeswarī temple; and though there are numerous Brahmanical temples, such as those at Baidyanāth and Deo-Barunārak, few belong to a very early period. The Muhammadans have left far grander monuments to bear witness to their power than the Hindu rulers of the district; and the finest structures now extant belong to the Sūri dynasty or the Mughal period, such as the magnificent specimens of sepulchral architecture at Sasarām and Chainpur and the interesting hill forts of Rohtās and Shergarh. The principal buildings of archæological or historical interest are described in Chapter XV.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS. Growth of population.

SHAHABAD was one of the districts statistically surveyed by Dr. Buchanan Hamilton in the beginning of the 19th century, when the boundaries were much the same as at present, except that a portion of Mirzāpur projected into it across the Karamnāsā, and a long narrow strip of land, now lying in the district of Ghāzīpur between the Ganges and Gogra, was included in it. He estimated the area at 4,087 square miles, with a population of 1,419,520 souls, giving an average density of 347 to the square mile. In 1849, a return based upon the survey of 1844-46 showed the area as 4,404 square miles, and the population as 1,602,274 or 364 per square mile. The first regular census was taken in 1872, when the enumeration disclosed a total population of 1,723,974 persons; the area was taken at 4,385 square miles, and the average density of the population was 393 persons per square mile. The population of the district as at present constituted was then 1,710,471, and by the census of 1881 it had increased to 1,949,900. During the next 10 years there was a further growth amounting to 5·8 per cent, and in 1891 the population was returned as 2,060,579 persons; the increase shown in these two decades being largely due to the development of cultivation and the influx of immigrants caused by the opening of the Son Canals. This growth of population was, however, not sustained, and the census of 1901 showed a decline, the number of inhabitants recorded being 1,962,696 persons. The principal statistics of this census will be found in the statistical Appendix.

Census of 1901.

The decrease was in great part due to two causes: the outbreak of plague at the time of the census and the general unhealthiness of the district. Shāhābād had escaped the ravages of plague until shortly before the census, when it broke out in the head-quarters station. The outbreak was not a severe one and the number of deaths reported was small, but the alarm which the plague epidemic created was sufficient to drive to their houses most of the temporary settlers in the district; and in the event only 26,877 foreign-born males were found in Shāhābād, as compared with 73,184 ten years previously. This loss of temporary

settlers affected the results of the enumeration considerably, more especially as the increase of population in 1891 was very largely accounted for by immigration. It is a noticeable fact that in the Arrah thāna alone, which in that year returned an increase of 12 per cent., as many as 6·6 per cent. of the population were immigrants from other districts; and, if immigrants are excluded, the district actually lost as a whole rather than gained in the decade ending in 1891, a fact due to the persistent fever which was never absent since the year 1879. During the next decade the district maintained its reputation for unhealthiness, it was visited by famine, and fever continued to cause great mortality. It is not altogether surprising, therefore, that these adverse conditions resulted in a decrease in the population amounting to 97,883 or 4·7 per cent. The falling off was most marked in the Bhabuā sub-division, where it was due to the unhealthiness of the climate and to the migration of the people to more favoured parts of the district, especially during the famine of 1896-97. Elsewhere the decrease was greatest in the Arrah thāna, where it may be wholly ascribed to the exodus on account of the plague. The only thānas that gained ground were Sasarām, Bikramganj and Dehrī, three of the four police circles forming the Sasarām sub-division; the area under irrigation is greater here than in other parts of the district, and the construction of the Mughalsarai-Gayā Railway also caused an influx of labour into portions of the tract. On the other hand, Pīru thāna in the head-quarters sub-division, which borders on this tract and which also has a plentiful supply of canal water, was practically stationary.

Density of population.

In the district as a whole there are 449 persons to the square mile, as compared with the average of 400 per square mile for the whole of Bengal, and of 653 for the Patna Division; the density of the population in Shāhābād is, in fact, less than in any other district in the Division except Gayā (437 per square mile). It varies considerably in different parts; it is greatest in the rich and highly cultivated tracts to the north and north-east, where the people are prosperous and well-to-do; but decreases towards the south and south-east, where a large area is covered by the Kaimur hills, which afford but scanty space for cultivation and support a sparse population thinly scattered over the plateau. These factors result in a marked variation between the northern and southern sub-divisions, as those of Sasāram and Bhabuā support less than half of the number of persons to the square mile which the more fertile areas in the head-quarters and Buxar sub-divisions maintain. Statistics of the population appear in the separate Appendix, from which it will be seen that the

pressure of the population on the land is greatest in the Arrah thāna, where there is the enormous number of 890 persons to the square mile, and that the minimum is reached in the thinly populated tract comprised in the Bhabuā thāna, which with 181 persons to the square mile is more sparsely inhabited than any tract in South Bihār.

Migration.

Emigration to the Colonies is more popular in Shāhābād than elsewhere in Bengal, and during the decade ending in 1901 it supplied nearly half of the emigrants from the Province. The volume of such permanent migration is, however, small; the total number of emigrants in these 10 years was only 7,633; out of 1,170 persons registered in Shāhābād in the last year of the decade only 543 were natives of the district; and in 1904 the number of emigrants registered was as low as 240. On the other hand, a considerable number find their way to the labour districts of Assam, and in 1901 that Province contained over 15,000 emigrants from Shāhābād. The interchange of population with the contiguous districts of the United Provinces leaves the number of its inhabitants practically unchanged; at the last census 42,183 natives of Ballia, Ghāzīpur, Benares and Mirzāpur were residing in Shāhābād, while the number of emigrants enumerated in those 4 districts was 42,880. There is a similar ebb and flow between Shāhābād and the adjoining districts in Bengal; it loses slightly to Palāmau, but gains from the South Bihār districts; and the balance is on the whole in its favour, as the immigrants at the last census numbered 36,815 and the emigrants only 23,206. As regards more distant places in Bengal, the emigrants are far more numerous, numbering 77,856 as compared with 3,560 immigrants. Many inhabitants of Shāhābād seek service of different kinds in Lower Bengal; they are greatly in demand all over the Province as zamīndārs' peons and clubmen; and large numbers migrate during the winter months in search of field-work. They are specially numerous in Purnea, North Bengal, Dacca and Calcutta; and in 1901 altogether 15,090 emigrants were enumerated in the metropolis, 10,300 of these being males.

Towns and villages.

Shāhābād is distinctly an agricultural district; and of the total population only 6 per cent. live in urban areas, the remainder of the inhabitants congregating in 5,515 villages. There are only six towns, Arrah, Bhabuā, Buxar, Dumraon, Jagdīspur and Sasarām, with an aggregate population of 118,106; and Arrah alone accounts for about two-fifths of the whole number. At the last census all the towns, except Sasarām, showed a decrease, which was, however, very slight in the case of Arrah and was

probably due to the appearance of plague there shortly before the enumeration. In Bhabuā the decrease was heavy, and that town has now only about the same number of inhabitants as in 1881.

Sex and age. In common with other Bihār districts, Shāhābād has a marked excess of females over males, there being 1,096 females to every thousand males, a ratio higher than elsewhere in the districts lying south of the Ganges. The proportion of unmarried persons is also higher than in any of the latter districts, viz., 428 out of 1,000 males and 296 out of every thousand females. In spite of the large number of emigrants from the district, the mean age of the population is higher than in other parts of the Province, except in Central Bengal. This is only what is to be expected in a declining population where births are comparatively few in number: and having regard to the decrease in the population which has taken place, the wonder is that the average age has not risen to a higher figure.

Public health. The health of the people is dealt with in Chapter IV, and it will suffice here to say that even in the villages the tendency of the people is towards aggregation, and that instead of living in hamlets, each nestling within its own belt of trees, as in Bengal, they cluster in closely packed villages, usually consisting of a main street with narrow and ill-ventilated side lanes. The sanitary conditions are extremely primitive, while the apathy of the people and the unwholesome habits to which they are rooted render the task of village sanitation on any appreciable scale most difficult. In the towns, matters are better, as a regular system of conservancy is kept up; but none of them except Arrah have a pure water-supply, and none possess adequate drainage. Like the villages, they suffer from crowded and badly aligned blocks of houses intersected by narrow lanes, and the mortality from plague, dysentery and cholera is generally greater than in the rural areas.

Education. The education of the people is referred to in Chapter XIV, from which it will be seen that they are backward in this respect, especially in the south of the district.

Language. The vernacular current over the whole district is the dialect of Bihāri Hindī called Bhojpuri,* after the *pargana* of Bhojpur, which was formerly the centre of the power of the Dumraon Rāj. This dialect, which is spoken by 1,901,353 persons in the district, has been characterized as a handy article made for current use, not too much encumbered by grammatical subtleties, and suitable to an

* For a full account of Bhojpuri, *see* Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. V, from which this sketch of the dialect has been condensed.

alert and active people. In contrast with the Maithilī dialect, it pronounces the vowel *a* with the clear sharp-cut accent heard all over central Hindustān; and on the other hand it possesses a long drawled vowel *ā* which gives a tone to the whole language. The form current in Shāhābād is the standard Bhojpuri, which exhibits a local peculiarity in preferring the letter *r* to *t* in the conjugation of the auxiliary verb (*e.g.*, *bāre*, he is, instead of *bāte*). Bhojpuri has scarcely any indigenous literature, though a few books have been printed in it, and numerous songs are current, such as the epic of the cowherd Lorik, and what Dr. Grierson calls the Bhojpuri National Anthem, *i.e.*, the song of the stick, in which the many virtues of the *lāthi* are rehearsed. The character in general use in writing Bhojpuri is the Kaithi, but the Devanāgari is also used by the educated classes. There is an old belief that the Kharwārs in the south speak a separate sub-dialect, but examination has shown that their language is the same as the ordinary Bhojpuri of the district.

Muhammadans and Kāyasths mostly speak the Awadhi dialect of Eastern Hindī (literally the language of Oudh); and Dr. Grierson considers that this is possibly an example of the survival of the influence of the former Muhammadan court of Lucknow. It is estimated that in Shāhābād 137,000 persons speak Awadhi; and this dialect is also commonly used as a sort of language of politeness by the rustics who have picked it up from their Musalmān friends and imagine it to be the Hindustāni of polite society. The Devanāgari and the Kaithi characters are both used in writing Awadhi; and the Persian character is also occasionally used by the educated classes.

Occupations.

The occupations of the people are discussed in Chapter IX, which shows that the great majority are dependent for their livelihood on agriculture.

RELIGIONS.

Hindus and Muhammadans.

By religion, nearly 93 per cent. of the population are Hindus (1,819,641) and practically all the remainder are Muhammadans (142,213). The latter are relatively less numerous than in any other district in Bihār, forming only 7·25 per cent. of the population, a result hardly to be expected considering the strong footing they acquired in the south. Here a number of Rājputs and other Hindu castes turned Musalmān, some being made converts by force and others finding substantial advantages in voluntarily embracing Islām. Such Muhammadans are not uncommon in several villages in Chainpur, where they still practise many Hindu customs. The chief centre of the Muhammadans is in Sasarām town, where they account for over 42 per cent. of the population. Many of them are Pathāns, who are probably descended from the

members of the household of Hasan Sūr Shāh and Sher Shāh, but there were Muhammadans in the town long before this period and the ancestors of the Sajjāda-nashīn were *fakīrs* there at a much earlier time. The leading Muhammadan families are, however, immigrants of a comparatively recent date. The Chaudhris of Arrah are, it is true, said to have settled there in the time of Fīroz Shāh, but other families have come into Shāhābād at a far later time, as after the fall of Delhi in 1759 there was an influx of members of the Muhammadan nobility attached to the I[illegible] court who retired with their followers to the *jāgīrs* they held in this district.

Christians. There are only 375 Christians, mostly of European and Eurasian descent. A congregation of about 50 Native Christians is attached to the only mission working in the district, the German Evangelical Lutheran Mission of Rānchī. This mission has a branch at Buxar, where a German minister educates native orphans and conducts evangelistic work.

Jains. Sikhs. Except for a few Brahmos, the only other religion represented at the census was that of the Jains, who number in all 449 and who are almost entirely confined to the town of Arrah. It may, however, be questioned whether the Agraharis* in Sasarām should not have been recorded as Sikhs by religion. This is a caste following the trade of cloth and grain merchants, which is divided into two classes, known as the Singh Agraharis and the Munria Agraharis. The former, who number about 600 persons, profess to be followers of the Guru Govind Singh, revere the Granth, and regard it as an essential of their religion to keep the outward signs of Sikhism. In this belief, they abstain from tobacco, keep their hair and beard unshorn, wear, the iron *karad* or bracelet, the wooden *kanga* or comb, and the *kachh* or short drawers. The other sect, the Munrias, who are numerically insignificant, are followers of Nānak, revere his Granth and shave like other Hindus. The Agraharis say they have been settled in Sasarām for 14 or 15 generations, and point to the north as their original home. They still observe a form of initiation for outsiders, like the *pahul* or *amrit* of orthodox Sikhs, which they call *khānda amrit chakhao* or *charna amrit chakhao*, and they also keep up the ceremony of *karā parshād* or the Sikh rite of communion.

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS. In recent years the only religious movements of any note occurred in 1893-94, when there was an outburst of religious excitement which found expression in the anti-kine-killing agitation,

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* See the Agraharis of Sasarām, by L. S. S. O'Malley, J. A. S. B., Vol. LXXIII, Part III, 1904.

the ploughmen's begging movement and the tree-daubing mystery. The first movement appears to have been due to the activity of the Gorakshinī Sabhās or associations for the protection of cattle. These societies, the legitimate object of which is the care of diseased, aged and otherwise useless cattle, started a crusade against the killing of kine, sent out emissaries to preach their doctrines, and collected subscriptions to further their objects. The relations between Hindus and Muhammadans soon became severely strained, and in various parts of the district the feeling aroused among the former manifested itself in the rescue of cattle from Muhammadans and in objections to their slaughtering cattle and selling the meat. The climax of popular excitement was finally reached at the end of August 1893, when two very serious riots occurred at Koāth in the Sasarām sub-division. In the first of these a large concourse of Hindus assembled from the neighbouring villages and made a raid on the Muhammadan butchers of Koāth, who were charged with having caught and slaughtered a Brāhmanī bull. In revenge for this outrage, the Muhammadans made an attack on the Hindu quarter, in the course of which guns were used and several persons were severely injured. The facts proved at the trials which ensued and in the course of a subsequent local enquiry showed that a large number of villages for several miles round Koāth were either directly implicated or were in such a disturbed state as to necessitate measures for preserving the peace; and a large body of additional police was accordingly quartered for one year in Koāth and 46 other villages.

Anti-kine-killing agitation.

The ploughmen's begging movement, or as it should more properly be called the Mahādeo *pūjā*, was a curious exhibition of religious feeling which occurred soon afterwards. 'All ploughmen, the story goes, were obliged to give their cattle three days' rest, and go round the neighbouring villages begging. With the proceeds three wheaten cakes were prepared—one for the ploughman himself, one for his cattle, while the third had to be buried under their stalls. This penance was performed by the people in consequence of a rumour that the god Mahādeo had imposed it to expiate the sin committed by the agricultural community in overworking their cattle. From a note furnished by Mr. C. A. Oldham, I.C.S., who was Sub-divisional Officer of Buxar at the time, it appears that the origin of the movement in this district was a rumour that a man was ploughing a field when Mahādeo appeared to him in the form of a Brāhman and warned him not to plough except with four oxen. The ploughman replied that it was not his business to say how many oxen should be

Ploughmen's begging movement.

used, but the business of his master. The man's master, who appears to have been consulted, declined to allow four oxen for one plough; and the ploughman then went on with his ploughing. Mahādeo again appeared to him in the same guise, and asked him to look behind him. As he did so, he noticed that his plough and pair of oxen had disappeared, and he himself became suddenly blind. The story went on that Mahādeo next appeared to his master in a dream, warning him that he must use four oxen to a plough, or use three, but only plough up to midday. Mahādeo also exhorted him to be more attentive to his worship in future, and prescribed the following *pūjā* as a penance. He was to go round the country-side begging for 2½ months before the Holī festival carrying a ploughshare, and for 2½ months after the Holī carrying the *juāth* or yoke, and after the Chaitnomi a *henga* or harrow. He was to break his waist-string, take one Gorakhpuri pice with him, and beg ten other such pice. From the ten pice obtained by begging he was to spend one pice in purchasing a new waist-string; one pice was to be spent on *ghī* for *hom;* one pice to be given to a Brāhman as *dakshinā;* and the remaining pice were to be spent on flour, with which three *chapatis* were to be made in the cowshed. One of these *chapatis* he was to eat himself; the second he was to bury in the cowshed, and the third he was to give to one of his oxen to eat.

Though the alleged appearance of Mahādeo was said to have taken place only a day before, people flocked in to bathe in the Ganges from all sides of the sub-division, from places twenty and thirty miles away in different directions, showing that the rumour had been spread from village to village with marvellous rapidity. One of the most remarkable features of this *pūjā* was the scrupulous care with which for some weeks the people continued to carry out the orders which they supposed had been given them by their god. The remarkably elaborate nature of this penance gives reason, however, to suppose that it had been carefully thought out, and its inception and spread among the villagers has been attributed to the efforts of those interested in the Gorakshinī agitation to keep the movement afloat.

The tree-daubing mystery.

Tree-daubing was another widespread movement, the meaning of which still affords ground for speculation. By the most reliable reports it commenced about the latter end of February 1894 in the north-east corner of Bihār in the neighbourhood of the Janakpur shrine, which lies across the border in Nepāl. The movement consisted in marking trees with daubs of mud, in which were stuck hairs of different animals, buffaloes' hair and pigs' bristles predominating. It slowly spread through the

Gangetic districts, eastwards into Bhāgalpur and Purnea, and westwards through many of the districts of the United Provinces. It appeared in a few places in this district, where it was traced in several instances to wandering gangs of *sādhus*. As an explanation of the movement, it was suggested at the time that the sign was intended as an advertisement of the shrine of Janakpur; and this view was accepted officially.

The following account of the character of the people is taken from Dr. Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India:—"The Bhojpuri-speaking country is inhabited by a people curiously different from the others who speak Bihāri dialects. They form the fighting nation of Hindustān. An alert and active nationality, with few scruples and considerable abilities, dearly loving a fight for fighting's sake, they have spread all over Aryan India, each man ready to carve his fortune out of any opportunity which may present itself to him. They furnish a rich mine of recruitment to the Hindustāni army, and, on the other hand, they took a prominent part in the Mutiny of 1857. As fond as an Irishman is of a stick, the long-boned, stalwart Bhojpuri, with his staff in hand, is a familiar object striding over fields far from his home. Thousands of them have emigrated to British Colonies and have returned rich men; every year still larger numbers wander over Northern Bengal and seek employment, either honestly, as *pālki*-bearers, or otherwise as dacoits. Every Bengal zamīndār keeps a posse of these men, euphemistically termed *darwāns*, to keep his tenants in order. Calcutta, where they are employed, and feared, by the less heroic natives of Bengal, is full of them." CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE.

The numbers and distribution of the castes exceeding 25,000 persons are given in the Appendix. The most numerous Hindu castes are the Ahīrs, Brāhmans, Rājputs, Koiris and Chamārs, these five castes accounting between them for nearly half of the total population. PRINCIPAL CASTES.

Numerically the strongest caste is that of the Ahīrs or Goālās, who number 255,781 persons, or 13 per cent. of the inhabitants of the district. Their hereditary occupation is that of herdsmen, but with this they combine cultivation, and a large number have given up pastoral pursuits altogether and are only tillers of the soil. They have attained an unenviable reputation as cattle-lifters and furnish more than their proper quota of the jail population. They predominate in the Arrah thāna, where there are nearly 50,000 members of the caste. Ahīrs.

Next in order come the Brāhmans, who with 207,071 persons account for over one-tenth of the population. They are most Brāhmans.

numerous in the Dumraon thāna, where they number nearly 40,000; but the Brāhman has a home in every hamlet as a family priest presiding over the worship and social ceremonies of the village community. They are maintained by their religious clients (*jajmāns*), but great numbers have taken to agriculture and derive their livelihood from the land.

Rājputs. The Rājputs, who are nearly as numerous (206,937), are perhaps the most interesting of all the castes found in this district; they are found in larger numbers here than in any other district in Bengal except Sāran, and are largely the descendants of the early conquerors of Shāhābād. There seems no doubt that Rājputs from Ujjain in Mālwā overcame the Cheros, who had established their rule after the downfall of the Gupta dynasty; Rājā Bhoj is credited with having subdued them over a large part of the country and with having brought the *pargana* of Bhojpur under his control; and the family records of the Rājās of the Harihobans clan, who formerly ruled at Bihiā, notice a conflict between their chiefs and the Cheros which lasted for hundreds of years and finally terminated in favour of the Rājputs. The Mahārājās of Dumraon are Ujjain Rājputs, and a number of the zamīndārs in this district belong to the same sub-caste and are descendants of the immigrant Rājputs who conquered the Cheros. Shortly after the Muhammadan invasion three Ujjain *sardārs* are frequently mentioned in the district annals, viz., those of Jagdīspur, Dumraon and Buxar; and for a long time they maintained themselves with the state and power of small potentates. Another important sub-caste is the Rāj Kuar, of which the Rājā of Bhagwānpur is one of the leading representatives. The family tradition relates that his ancestor was one of the sons of a Rājā of Sikri in the United Provinces who quarrelled and agreed to separate, one moving north-west to Jammu, while another came to Shāhābād and settled in Chainpur and afterwards in Bhagwānpur. As a result of this settlement, the Savars or Suirs, who were then established in the Bhabuā sub-division, are said to have been forced to retire southwards and eastwards. There are many other sub-castes of Rājputs, all of whom appear to have migrated from the north-west, the Besains saying that they came from Majhauli-Barikpur to the west of Mirzāpur and the Bais from Baiswara near Lucknow; they appear to have begun to immigrate not less than 300 years ago and to have come in a peaceable manner. They formed a large portion of the East India Company's forces, and supplied some of its best soldiers to the sepoy army. Buchanan Hamilton estimated that at least 12,000 sepoys were natives of this district, and many of them were given grants of land in lieu of

pension, now generally known as "Inglis" or "Arāzi Line," on which their descendants are still settled. The presence in the native army of a large proportion of Shāhābād Rājputs was one of the chief causes which rendered this the most disaffected district in Bengal during the Mutiny; among those slain at the battle of Gujrājganj just before the relief of Arrah were found the sepoys of nine different regiments; and it is well known that the Rājputs of his own district formed the bulk of Kuar Singh's mutineers. They have now taken to more peaceable pursuits, and though they still furnish some recruits for the native army, they are also found all over Bengal serving as peons, policemen and *darwāns*. In the district itself they are usually land owners and cultivators, and in many cases occupy whole villages.

Though not so strong numerically (82,334), the Bābhans, or Bhuinhārs as they call themselves, may be mentioned here, as they rank on nearly the same level as the two castes just mentioned and are one of the most important castes in the district. Various traditions as to their origin are current. One is to the effect that they are descended from Brāhmans who took to agricultural pursuits, and one of the titles they claim is zamīndār Brāhman. Another local legend declares that they were originally drummers to Rāvana, King of Lankā. Yet another is that Jarāsandha, king of Magadha, offered a great sacrifice at which a lakh and a quarter of Brāhmans were required to be present. The Dīwān did his best to meet the demand, but was driven to eke out the local supply by distributing sacred threads among members of the lower castes and palming them off on the king as genuine Brāhmans. Jarāsandha's suspicions being roused by the odd appearance of some of the guests, the Dīwān was compelled to guarantee their respectability by eating the food which they had cooked; while the Brāhmans thus manufactured, failing to gain admission into their supposed caste, had to set up a caste of their own, the name of which (Bābhan or Bāhman) is popularly supposed to mean a sham Brāhman; just as in some districts an inferior Rājput is called a Rāut, the corruption of the name betokening the corruption of the caste. On the other hand, it has been pointed out that Bābhan is merely the Pālī form of Brāhman, and that the word is often found in Asoka's edicts. It has therefore been conjectured that those now known as Bābhans remained Buddhists after the Brāhmans around them had reverted to Hinduism, and so the Pālī name continued to be applied to them; while the synonym Bhuinhār is explained as referring to their having seized the lands attached to the old Buddhist monasteries. In support of this theory, it may be mentioned that in this

Bābhans.

Province they are practically confined to Bihār, *i.e.*, the ancient kingdom of Magadha, which long remained the centre of Buddhism.

Whatever their origin, they stand on much the same level as Rājputs in this district. Brahmanical titles, such as Misr, Pānre and Tewāri, are used along with the Rājput titles of Singh, Rāi and Thākur; and members of other castes accord to them the salutation *pranām* ordinarily reserved for Brāhmans, while the Bābhan responds with the benediction *āsirbād*. Like the Rājputs they are usually land owners and cultivators; and like them they are fairly prosperous, as they generally have the best irrigated lands, are not too scrupulous towards the lower castes, and when there is likely to be a deficiency of water or when it is urgently wanted, take it first, whilst the weaker have to wait and perhaps go without it.

Koiris.

The other large castes call for only a brief notice. The Koiris (155,264) are skilful and industrious cultivators, who are the best tenants to be found in the district. They are a purely agricultural caste, and also work as market gardeners and rear such crops as vegetables, chillies, potatoes and poppy; they are proud of their position as adroit cultivators and have been known to outcaste a man for adulterating the opium produced by him for Government.

Chamars.

The Chamārs (121,147) are the tanners of the country; the skins of all cattle dying within their village are their perquisite, and, in return for this privilege, they supply and repair the straps of the villagers' plough yokes and provide their neighbours with shoes at a cheap rate. Not unnaturally they have an ill name as cattle poisoners and frequently are beaten when suspected of this nefarious practice. The Chamār is also the village drummer and his wife is the indigenous midwife.

Jolahās.

Among the Muhammadans the weaver caste, Jolahās, is the most numerous (53,495). Like the Chamārs they hold a low rank in the social community, and both these castes used to be employed by the zamīndārs as porters. Buchanan Hamilton in his account of Shāhābād stated that in his time porters were used to carry the baggage of travellers, and weavers and shoemakers were generally held bound to perform this service whenever required by their landlords, who in return exempted them from ground-rent for their huts. Weaving is their hereditary occupation, but the fabrics woven at their hand-looms have been driven out of the market by the cheap piece-goods imported from Europe. Many of them have thrown up weaving for agriculture, and others have taken to service and trade. A considerable proportion travel through Bengal trading in cloth, piece-goods and carpets, setting out at the commencement of the cold weather and returning to their homes for the rainy season.

CHAPTER IV.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

A COMPARISON of vital statistics for any lengthy periods is rendered impossible by the changes in the system of registering births and deaths which have taken place from time to time. In 1869 the duty of reporting deaths was imposed on the village *chaukīdārs*, and in 1876 the system was extended to births; but the returns received were so incomplete that they were soon discontinued, and, except in towns, deaths alone were registered until 1892, when the collection of statistics of births as well as of deaths was ordered, and the system now in vogue was introduced. VITAL STATISTICS.

So far as they can be accepted—and they are sufficiently accurate for the purpose of calculating the approximate growth of the population—the returns submitted since that year up to the end of 1904 show that the population of the district has increased but little, as the excess of births over deaths is only 66,000. This result may be attributed to three special causes, famine, fever and plague. The people suffered from famine in 1896-97, and the vital statistics quickly gave evidence of its indirect results, as the birth-rate dropped from 35·50 per mille in 1896 to 32·90 in the next year and to 29·80 in 1898; there was then a sudden rise to 43·50 in 1899, a ratio far above any of those previously recorded. The mortuary returns afford equally clear indications of its effects, as the death-rate rose suddenly from 27·70 a thousand in 1896 to 35·50 in 1897, though it declined again in the following year to 23·30. The incidence of fever has been discussed below, and it will suffice here to say that in 1894, when the number of deaths was nearly 110,000 or 53 per mille, fever was responsible for most of the mortality. Plague is a more recent visitation, but the constant epidemics of this disease since 1901 have caused a loss of population amounting to over 40,000.

During the period 1892–1900 the district was distinctly decadent, as there were 5,000 more deaths than births; but it has since recovered, and in the 4 years 1901–04 the increase in births has been very marked, the ratio varying from 41·75 to 45·70; the latter figure was reached in 1904 and represents a birth-rate higher than any previously returned. The

excess of births over deaths (71,000) during this latter period would indeed have been still greater had not the number of the latter been swelled by the unusual mortality of 1903. In that year the returns showed 90,000 deaths, or nearly 46 a thousand, a figure exceeded only in the exceptionally unhealthy year 1894. In the Buxar thāna the ratio was as high as 63·22; but the most noticeable feature of the mortuary returns was the excessive mortality in towns. In Sasarām it was 46·31, in Arrah 53·56, and in Jagdīspur 61·21 a thousand, the high death-rate in the first town being due to the prevalence of cholera, and in Arrah and Jagdīspur to plague, which caused a mortality of 35·04 and 28·29 per thousand of their population. In 1904 matters improved somewhat, as there were only 73,800 deaths, but even so the number of deaths recorded was greater than even in the famine year of 1897.

DISEASES. Fever.

According to the returns, by far the greatest number of deaths are due to fever, from which the district has suffered severely for many years past. The *chaukīdār* who is responsible for the returns is not a medical expert, and can diagnose only a few well-defined diseases; but it may be safely assumed that where, as in Shāhābād, the mortality ascribed to fever is unusually high, the greater part of the excess over the normal is due to malarial affections. The disease has been more or less persistent since 1879; and in the ten years ending in 1890 the recorded death-rate varied from 18·7 per mille in Belauti (Shāhpur) to 31·8 in the Kargahar thāna. The worst year of the decade was 1886, when Shāhābād was stigmatized as the worst district in the whole Province in respect of fever mortality, the death-rate ranging from 30·4 per thousand in the Sasarām thāna to as much as 42·9 in Kargahar. In the quinquennium 1885–89, the average mortality was higher than in any other part of the Patna Division; and in the last year of this period upwards of 90 per cent. of all the villages in the district suffered from its ravages. During the next decade mortality averaged 24·18 and only twice fell below 20 a thousand; and when the epidemic was at its height in 1894, the number of deaths due to it reached the appalling total of 78,918 or 38·23 per mille. The disease was not so prevalent in 1901 and 1902, but there was a recrudescence in 1903, the deaths recorded being over 57,000. In 1904 the number of deaths returned as due to fever was 48,600, or 24·77 as compared with 21·06 per mille in the whole of the Patna Division.

The cause of the origin and prevalence of fever in Shāhābād is uncertain; and it has been suggested at various times that the outbreak was connected with the great extension of canals and

distributaries from the Son irrigation works, and that the disease was due to the fact that they raised the level of the sub-soil water and interfered by their embankments with the natural surface drainage of the country. This view, however, is not supported by the results of recent research regarding the spread of malarial affections; and it is noteworthy that it was no innovation to stop the natural drainage, as from time immemorial it has been the custom to build embankments across its line and to collect water in the rude reservoirs so formed. Besides this, the fever prevailed with intensity in the Gayā district for some years before it began its destructive march through Shāhābād; and during its earlier days at least it bore little resemblance to the ordinary malarial type, but was choleraic in its symptoms and rapidly fatal. It has been suggested therefore that in Shāhabād, as in Gayā and Monghyr, the fever was originally a real epidemic, contagious in its character, which extended northward from the original scene of its ravages in the Burdwān Division.

Plague has been present in recurring epidemics since the year 1900. In that year it was imported from the neighbouring districts, but only the north-east of Shāhābād was attacked and the mortality caused was very slight. In 1901 the disease again appeared, and this year the outbreak was much more serious, as over 5,000 deaths were due to its ravages; but in the following year the mortality decreased to 2,280. Plague recurred with greater severity in 1903, when, in spite of the immunity of the district during the 4 months June to September, there were altogether 7,600 deaths. In 1904 the epidemic accounted for no less than 10,400 deaths, the death-rate being 5·34 per thousand of the population; and in the first six months of 1905 the disease raged with still greater virulence and caused over 15,800 deaths. With two exceptions, no district in Bengal has suffered so severely from this disease. Throughout these years the disease has pursued a regular course, decreasing or disappearing entirely in the hot and rainy weather months, reappearing after the rains and reaching its climax in the cold weather. The only means employed by the people to stamp out the disease are disinfection and the evacuation of affected areas. The former method is unpopular and has been but little resorted to. Evacuation has, however, increased in popularity, as the people, though at first averse to it, have year by year become more ready to leave their houses and to build temporary shelters during the period of the epidemic. Plague.

After fever and plague, the principal diseases are dysentery, diarrhœa, cholera and small-pox. In 1903 the district suffered severely from cholera, and lost 6·12 per mille of its population Other diseases.

from this cause. The epidemic prevailed from June to August, causing over 10,600 deaths during this period; it is reported to have been aided by the late commencement of the monsoon, the disease diminishing greatly when rain fell in sufficient quantity to flush and cleanse the sources of drinking supply. Blindness is unusually common, the proportion of persons afflicted (181 per 100,000) being greater than in any other district in Bengal except Patna; its prevalence appears to be due to the glare and dust accompanying a hot and dry climate.

SANITATION. Outside the municipalities sanitary efforts are almost a negligible quality. On the outbreak of epidemics of cholera, native doctors are despatched to the affected villages and the worst of them are disinfected; but the people show an utter disregard for the commonest sanitary rules, and it is most difficult to overcome the *vis inertiæ* encountered in all classes where sanitation is concerned. Within municipal areas there is a system of conservancy; night-soil and other refuse are removed; and steps are taken to protect the sources of water supply. Arrah is, however, the only town which has a regular system of water supply, an account of which will be found in Chapter XIII.

VACCINATION. Vaccination is compulsory only in municipal areas, where it is performed by vaccinators who receive a fixed salary from the municipality. In rural areas it is carried out by licensed vaccinators who receive no salary, but are allowed to charge a fee of 2 annas for each person vaccinated. The number of licensed vaccinators is continually fluctuating; but the number employed at one time is generally about 100. The work is supervised by a District Inspector, and 4 Sub-Inspectors, one for each sub-division; all these officers being under the control of the Civil Surgeon.

The district, as a whole, is strongly averse to vaccination, and operations are only carried out with great difficulty. The same difficulty is experienced in the adjoining districts in which the Bhojpuri-speaking races prevail; and Shāhābād, Sāran, Ghāzīpur and Ballia, which are all backward districts, present a striking contrast in this respect to the Magahī-speaking districts of Patna and Gayā, where vaccination does not meet with anything like as much opposition among a less virile and more amenable people. When it was first introduced the people were bitterly opposed to the innovation; but finally Rājā Bikramājīt Singh of Dumraon consented, on the persuasion of the Collector, to vaccinate his grandsons, and this example had a most beneficial influence. The majority of the population is still hostile to vaccination; and the general indifference to the protection thus afforded may be illustrated by the fact that as recently as the year 1900-01 only 11·78

per mille of the population were successfully vaccinated. In spite of the fact that plague presented an additional difficulty and impeded the work considerably, the year 1904-05 showed a great improvement on these figures, as during that year 38,611 persons (20·93 per mille) were successfully vaccinated; but the ratio was still much lower than that for the Province as a whole (27·26), and during the previous five years it was only 17·87 as against 25·95 for the whole of Bengal. Statistics of vaccination from 1892-93 to 1901-02 will be found in the Appendix.

MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

The number of medical institutions in the district has more than doubled within the last 30 years, and there are now 13 dispensaries, of which the oldest and most important is that in Arrah town, established in 1860. Besides this, there are dispensaries at each of the sub-divisional head-quarters Buxar, Sasarām and Bhabuā, and at Akbarpur, Dehrī, Dumraon, Jagdīspur, Nāsriganj and Surajpura. The other institutions of this kind are those situaetd at Sikraul, Koāth and Basaun, which are kept up by the Public Works Department for the medical relief of those employed in connection with the canals and of the general population of the locality. By far the largest number of patients are treated for fever and next to that for skin diseases. Cataract operations are very numerous, and during the period 1896–1900 successful operations of this nature were performed in the case of 831 women and 744 men. Statistics of the daily attendance, indoor and out door, are given in the Appendix; and the following tables give the salient facts for 1904:—

Name of Dispensary.	Year of establishment.	Diseases treated.				
		Fever.	Diseases of the skin.	Diseases of the ear.	Diseases of the digestive organs.	Diseases of the eye.
Akbarpur	Sept, 1904	290	73	53	37	32
Arrah	1860	2,071	1,382	1,401	1,324	1,353
Bhabuā	1873	1,233	749	846	383	191
Buxar	1866	1,538	921	814	787	404
Dehrī	1872	1,104	318	365	316	277
Dumraon	1871	1,316	1,702	1,568	1,665	1,486
Jagdīspur	1864	2,051	1,099	862	683	652
Nāsriganj	1874	1,842	305	407	456	106
Sasarām	1865	1,636	1,049	1,207	1,020	616
Surajpura	July 1904	872	512	408	600	279
Irrigation Dispensary at—						
Basaun ...	1893	337	140	27	55	15
Koāth	1899	139	37	9	44	13
Sikraul ...	1874	368	37	8	67	7
Total ...	...	14,797	8,324	7,975	7,437	5,431

Name of Dispensary.	Receipts.				Expenditure.	
	Government contributions.	District funds.	Municipal funds.	Subscriptions and other sources.	Establishment.	Medicines, diet, buildings, etc.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Akbarpur ...	...	509	...	...	134	375
Arrah ...	198	4,500	1,700	3,392	3,212	4,409
Bhabuā ...	67	457	430	568	743	765
Buxar ...	111	2,000	1,483	638	917	3,315
Dehri ...	1,561	...	...	...	894	667
Dumraon ...	38	180	444	4,578	4,200	1,040
Jagdīspur ...	165	1,500	763	731	1,374	1,655
Nāsriganj ...	492	225	...	953	580	417
Sasarām ...	37	675	2,604	3,089	3,354	1,453
Surajpura ...	...	2,597	...	...	451	2,146
Irrigation Dispensary at—						
Basaun ...	779	...	...	...	606	179
Koāth ...	494	...	...	...	349	145
Sikraul ...	847	...	...	...	312	535
Total ...	4,789	12,643	7,424	13,949	17,126	17,101

CHAPTER V.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTS.

SHAHABAD is naturally divided into two well defined tracts, the agricultural conditions of which are widely different. The southern portion is occupied by the Kaimur hills, an area of undulating plateau, mostly covered with jungle, thinly inhabited and sparsely cultivated. The central and northern portions of the district on the other hand are fully cultivated and sustain a numerous population. GENERAL CONDITIONS.

The greater part of the plateau is unfit for cultivation owing to its rocky nature and to the forest growth which covers it. There are no facilities for irrigation; only a few villages are found scattered over the table-land; and cultivation is confined to the lands in their immediate vicinity. The attention of the ryots is chiefly devoted to the cultivation of the narrow valleys and depressions lying between the higher ridges which break the surface of the plateau, as these valleys contain a rich soil, are well watered by springs and produce excellent rice. Wheat, barley and mustard are raised on the fields surrounding their homesteads, which are protected by hedges of dry thorns against the ravages of wild pig and other animals; and a considerable space is also cleared round each village for grazing. In the rainy season these lands afford abundant pasturage, but are generally dry and arid in the hot weather; they are kept clear by being ploughed after long fallows and are then sown with pulse.

North of the hills, the country consists of old alluvium, except for a narrow strip of recent alluvium between the old Patna-Buxar road and the Ganges. The latter tract is regularly flooded by the Ganges; and, except for the villages and plantations on higher ground, it usually continues under water for four months during the rainy season. The periodical deposits of river silt maintain a perfectly level surface, and the soil thus fertilized produces magnificent cold weather crops. The land is ploughed as soon as the water recedes, and is then sown with wheat, barley, pulse and other food-crops, which require but little care and assistance to yield abundant harvests. The remainder of the district is generally flat, but has a considerable slope northwards. Rice is

the principal crop, but the rainfall is often insufficient to bring it to maturity and has to be supplemented by artificial irrigation, either from the network of channels and distributaries issuing from the Son Canals, or from the artificial reservoirs (*aharās*) for which the broken surface affords facilities.

In the whole district* 2,878 square miles are cultivated, 584 square miles being irrigated from the canals, and the amount of culturable waste is reported to be 312 square miles. Altogether 114 square miles are twice cropped; and an astonishing variety of staples are raised, several crops, such as gram, wheat, sesamum and linseed, being sometimes grown in the same field.

SOILS. Clay is the characteristic soil in the district and is the basis of all the other soil formations. Admixtures of sand alter its texture and quality, and the soil is designated clayey or sandy, according as clay or sand predominates, loams coming between the two extremes. Clayey soils are generally known as *kewāl*, *matiyār*, *karail* and *gurmat;* the distinction between each is mainly one of tenacity and colour, and the commonest is *karail*, which is mostly clay. This prevails through the whole of the district west of the Arrah-Sasarām road and north of the Grand Trunk Road; it is fairly retentive of moisture and is well suited both for rice and *rabi* crops, such as wheat, linseed, lentils and gram, the crop chosen depending on the level of the land and the possibility of irrigation. Loamy soils, the common name for which is *doras*, predominate south of the Grand Trunk Road, where they are annually fertilized by the hill streams, but they are also common in the canal irrigation area. *Doras* is a rich loam which grows good crops of rice, sugarcane, poppy, mustard and linseed; the name is frequently applied to soil in the immediate vicinity of village sites, and is distinguished from loams farther afield by such designations as *dihi*, *goenr*, etc. Sandy soil is generally called *balmat* or *balsundar*, and differs from loam merely in containing a greater percentage of sand; where it is of very loose texture, it is often known as *dhūs*, and when it is on a high level and hard enough to allow the water to flow readily off, it is called *tānr*. Soils consisting chiefly of fine sand (*bāl* or *benga*) are common along a strip three miles broad on the west bank of the Son, and require continuous irrigation to enable them to produce good crops; but, as a rule, sandy soils which contain a larger proportion of clay are the best available for the cultivation of rice, if they are benefited by canal irrigation. In the hills, the soil in the saucer-shaped

* The figures showing the area under cultivation and irrigation and the acreage of various crops are the averages for the 5 years ending in 1903-04.

valleys found between the undulating ridges consist of a rich vegetable mould swept down from above; and the low-lying strip along the Ganges consists of recent alluvium, known locally as *kadai*, which is periodically fertilized by fresh deposits of silt.

PRINCIPAL CROPS.

The crops grown in Shāhābād are divided into three great divisions, the *aghani*, *bhadoi* and *rabi* crops. The *aghani* is the winter crop of rice which is cut in the month of Aghan (November-December), the *bhadoi* is the early or autumn crop, reaped in the month of Bhādo (August-September), consisting of 60 days rice, *maruā*, *kodo*, Indian-corn, millets and less important grains; while the *rabi* crop, which is so called because it is harvested in the spring (*rabi*), includes such cold-weather crops as wheat, barley, oats and pulses. Out of the total cropped area 66 per cent. grows *aghani*, 21·8 per cent. grows *rabi*, and only in 12·2 per cent. are *bhadoi* crops raised. The latter is, therefore, relatively an unimportant crop, and the people are mainly dependent on the *aghani* rice. This is grown mostly in the neighbourhood of the canals and in the south of the district; the head-quarters sub-division and the land to the north along which the line of the East Indian Railway is carried are chiefly devoted to *rabi*.

Rice.

Rice, which occupies a normal area of 1,290,000 acres or 67·5 per cent. of the whole cropped area, forms the staple crop of the district. The *aghani* or winter rice forms the greater part of this crop and is raised on over 1,200,000 acres. It is sown broadcast after the commencement of the rains in June or July on lands selected for seed nurseries, which have previously been ploughed three or four times. After 4 or 6 weeks, when the young plants are about a foot high, they are generally transplanted; each plant is pulled out from the land, which is soft with standing water, and planted again, in rows from 2 to 3 inches apart, in flooded fields, which have been reploughed till the whole surface is reduced to a mud. The rice is then left to mature, with the aid of water, till towards the end of September. The water is then drained off and the fields are allowed to dry for 15 days, and at the end of that time they are again flooded. It is this practice, known as *nigar*, which makes the rainfall or, failing that, irrigation essential to a successful harvest. These late rains (the *Hathiyā*) are the most important in the year, as not only are they required to bring the winter crop to maturity, but also to provide moisture for the sowing of the *rabi* crops. Should no rain fall at this period, or if water cannot be procured from artificial sources, the plants will wither and become only fit for fodder; but if seasonable

Aghani rice.

showers fall or the crops are watered from *aharās* or canals, the rice comes to maturity in November or December.

Other kinds of rice

Some winter rice known as *bāwag* is not transplanted ; it is sown broadcast on low lands at the commencement of the rains, and also in years in which there has not been sufficient moisture to allow of transplantation at the proper time. The *bhadoi* rice, which covers 57,000 acres, is also sown broadcast in June or July and not transplanted ; it is regarded as a 60 days crop, and is generally harvested in August or September. There is another kind of rice, known as the *boro* or spring rice, which is sown in January, transplanted after a month and cut in April. It is grown only on marsh lands and in the beds of shallow rivers, and the area cultivated with it is inconsiderable.

A noticeable feature of rice cultivation is the way in which it is conducted religiously according to lunar* asterisms (*nachhattras*). The seed-beds throughout the country are, if possible, sown within a period of 15 days, called the *Adra nachhattra*, which lasts from about the 20th June to the 5th July. Transplantation from the seed-beds goes on during the *Punarbas*, *Pukh* and *Asres nachhattras* (18th July—15th August). The water on the fields in which the young plant has grown up after transplantation is regularly drained off in the *Utra nachhattra* (12th—25th September), a period when, as a rule, there is little rain ; and after the exposure of the soil to the air and sun, the usual heavy rain of the *Hathiyā nachhattra* (26th September—7th October) is awaited. After this, it is the universal custom to keep the fields wet during the *Chitra nachhattra* (8th—20th October); and at the commencement of the *Siwāti nachhattra* (21st October—3rd November) they are again drained, and the paddy is left to itself till the *Bisākha nachhattra* (4th—15th November) when it is cut.

Although there are sometimes slight variations in the times of sowing and transplanting from those given above, yet the cultivators are always extremely strict in draining off the water from the fields in the *Utra nachhattra*. It may be said that every cultivator begins, if he possibly can, to let off the water on the first day of that *nachhattra*, and this is done, without any hesitation, in the country commanded by the canals, because the cultivator looks to the Irrigation authorities to supply him with water, whether the *Hathiyā* rain fails entirely or not. It is generally agreed that after this draining (*nigar*), rice plants

* As the *nachhattras* are calculated according to phases of the moon, they vary slightly from English dates; but the greatest variation is only 5 days.

cannot exist for more than from 15 to 20 days, unless watered, without rapid deterioration; and as no ryot will under any circumstances take water till the *Hathiyā nachhattra* has commenced, the Canal Department is called upon to irrigate within a very few days every acre under lease. If water is delayed a week after it is wanted at this stage, the crop suffers; if it is delayed three weeks, it withers beyond redemption.

The *bhadoi* crops require plenty of rain with intervals of bright sunshine to bring them to maturity, and constant weeding is necessary for a good harvest. The time of sowing depends in the breaking of the monsoon; if the rainfall is early, they are sown in the beginning of June; but they can be sown as late as the middle of July without the prospect of the crop being lost. Harvesting usually extends from the 15th July to the 15th October. *Bhadoi* crops.

The principal *bhadoi* crop is maize (*Zea mays*), or Indian-corn (*makai*), which is raised on 51,000 acres; it is sown from the 20th June to the 20th July, and cut from the 15th July to the 15th August. Besides being consumed in the form of bread, or as *sattu* the young ears, while still green, are often parched in the cob, and so eaten. Next in importance to maize comes *maruā* (*Eleusine coracana*), a valuable millet occupying nearly 49,000 acres, which is grown from the 15th June to the 20th July, and cut from the 15th August to the 15th October. It is partly sown broadcast and partly transplanted to ground that afterwards gives a winter crop. The grain is largely consumed by the poorer classes in the form of *sattu*, or is converted into flour and made into a coarse bread; in bad seasons, when the rice crop fails, it supports the people till the spring crops have been harvested. *Janerā*, a species of Holcus, is often sown together with Indian-corn and is generally cut in September. Among millets *jowār* (*Sorghum vulgare*) is grown on 8,000 acres, and *bājra* or spiked millet (*Pennisetum typhoideum*) on 4,000 acres; they are sown in July and reaped in the beginning of the cold weather. *Kodo* (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*) is sown from the 20th June to the 31st July, and cut from the 19th September to the 3rd December. It is a millet cheaper than rice, which is popular with the poorer classes, as it can be readily grown on an inferior soil; it is eaten boiled like rice or sometimes in *chapatis*, but is not very nutritious. The chief oilseed grown at this time of the year is *til* or gingelly (*Sesamum indicum*) which is sown in July and reaped in September; its total acreage is, however, only 1,600 acres. The castor-oil plant (*Ricinus communis*) is sown from the 20th June to the 1st August and is cut from the 29th December to the 30th April.

Ploughing of the fields for the *rabi* crops commences early in the rains and is continued at convenient intervals, sufficient time being given to allow the upturned soil to be exposed to the air. In the case of clay soils in unirrigated parts, more frequent ploughing is necessary for all *rabi* crops, because otherwise the soil would become so hard that, if there was no rain at the sowing time, a crop could not be sown. The time of sowing *rabi* is generally regulated by two circumstances—the heavy rains of the *Hathiyā nachhattra* (26th September to 7th October) and the approaching cold season. If sown too late, the plants will not become strong enough to resist the cold ; if sown too early, the heavy rain will probably drown the seed and sprouting crop, and so necessitate re-sowing. The cultivators are thus anxious to sow as soon as the heavy rains have ceased, and the general rule is that the proper time for sowing most *rabi* crops is the *Chitra nachhattra* (8th to 20th October) and that it must not be delayed beyond the *Swāti nachhattra* (21st October—3rd November). A sufficient supply of water is essential at this time ; later on several waterings are required, and if there is no rain, the crops have to depend on well irrigation. They are finally harvested between the last week of February and the middle of April.

The most important of the cereals is wheat, which occupies altogether 122,000 acres. It is generally sown broadcast on sandy soil, and requires as a rule 4 waterings. It is frequently sown on lands from which a crop of early rice has been taken, and is often sown together with barley, or with gram, mustard, or linseed. The stubble is grazed by cattle, and the pounded straw (*bhūsa*) is used as fodder. Less than half the area under wheat is occupied by barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), which is sown partly with wheat, partly by itself, and partly with pulse. Like wheat, barley is sown broadcast and requires 4 waterings.

The other great class of *rabi* crops consists of pulses, of which gram or *but* (*Cicer arietinum*) is by far the most extensively grown, over 67,000 acres being given up to it. Besides forming an excellent fodder for fattening horses, this pulse is eaten by the natives in all stages of its growth. The young leaf is eaten and the grain is split and converted into *dāl*, or pounded into *sattu*. Among other crops may be mentioned peas, the *chīna* millet (*Panicum miliaceum*), *kurthī* (*Dolichos biflorus*) and various pulses and lentils, such as *rahar* (*Cajanus indicus*), *masurī* (*Ervum lens*) and *khesari* (*Lathyrus sativus*). The crop last named is frequently sown broadcast among the rice stubble. It requires no care ; and the grain is eaten by the poorer classes, who, unlike the people of Eastern Bengal, have no prejudice against its use.

Oilseeds occupy but a minor position among the *rabi* crops. The chief is linseed (*Linum usitatissimum*) which is grown on 10,000 acres; like gram, it is sown in the standing *aghani* rice about a fortnight before it is cut. Mustard (*Sinapis nigra*) accounts, with rape, for 5,000 acres; it is sown from the 15th October to the 20th November, and cut from the 25th December to the 28th February, but very little is left on the ground after the beginning of February. Oilseeds.

The fibre crops are inconsiderable; only 500 acres are under cotton and 1,500 acres under other fibres. Indigo was formerly grown to some extent, and the remains of old factories may be seen in different parts of the district, but the industry is now (1905) practically extinct, and it is reported that the cultivation is confined to 500 acres. By far the most important of the other crops are sugarcane and opium. The former, which is now cultivated extensively, covers 36,000 acres, and is one of the most valuable crops in the district. It is planted in February or March, and occupies the ground till the beginning of the next year, the crop taking as a rule 10 or 11 months to ripen. It is planted in cuttings of about a foot in length, in rows about 2 feet apart. When the plant begins to sprout, it is well watered and the surrounding earth is loosened. Each plant grows into a cluster of canes, which are generally ready for cutting in January or February. The crop requires great care, and must have 7 or 8 waterings, even if the other crops have to do without water in consequence. Other crops. Sugar-cane.

The production of opium is scarcely less important, as though the poppy is grown only on 18,500 acres, or about half of the area under sugarcane, the price obtained for the crude opium renders it a very valuable crop. The production of opium is a Government monopoly, and no person is allowed to grow poppy except on account of Government. Annual engagements are entered into by the cultivators, who, in consideration of the payment of an advance, agree to cultivate a certain quantity of land with poppy and to deliver the whole of the opium produced to the Government at a rate fixed according to its consistence, but subject to deductions for inferiority of quality. The best soil for poppy is loam, so situated that it can be highly manured and easily irrigated, and for this reason homestead land is generally selected. The cultivation requires much attention throughout the growth of the plant. From the commencement of the rains in June until October the ground is prepared by repeated ploughings, weedings and manuring, and the seed is sown in November. Several waterings and weedings are ordinarily necessary before the plant reaches Opium.

maturity in February. After the plant has flowered, the first process is to remove the petals, which are preserved, to be used afterwards as coverings for the opium cakes. The opium is then collected during the months of February and March, by scarifying the capsules in the afternoon with an iron instrument and scraping off the exudation the next morning. In the beginning of April the cultivators bring in their opium to the weighment centres of the different Sub-Agencies, where it is examined and weighed, and the balance due according to the Opium Officer's valuation is paid to them. Final adjustments are made in August after the value of the drug has been ascertained by assay at the Patna Factory, where the final process of preparing the drug in balls or cakes is conducted.

Fruits and vegetables.

Among the cultivated fruits the commonest are the plantain, mango, orange, lemon, *lichī* (*Nephelium litchi*), jack fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) and custard-apple (*Anona squamosa*). The date-palm is cultivated for the sake of its juice, from which a liquor, *tāri*, is manufactured. The *mahuā* flower is used for the manufacture of country spirit, and is also eaten by the poorer classes, especially by those living near the jungles. Vegetables are cultivated in garden plots for household use, and also on a larger scale in the neighbourhood of towns. The most extensively grown are the egg-plant or *baigun* (*Solanum Melongena*), ground-nut (*Trichosanthes dioica*), pumpkin (*Lagenaria vulgaris*) and gourd (*Benincasa cerifera*), which are grown in the rains, while in the winter carrots, radishes, potatoes and melons are cultivated. Among condiments the favourite is the chilli, which is grown all the year round; carraway (*zīrā*), coriander (*dhaniyā*) and aniseed (*sonf*) are all cultivated from October to March. Carraway and aniseed are largely grown in the Bhabuā sub-division, whence they are exported to other districts.

EXTENSION OF CULTIVATION.

Buchanan Hamilton estimated that out of a total area of 4,087 square miles, as many as 1,746 square miles were waste. Of this area 764 square miles were occupied by hills and table-land, while 672 square miles consisted of forests, jungles, and deserted villages and fields; and he left it on record that the lands near Nokhā had not yet recovered from the desolation caused by the wars of Kāsim Alī, and that in some *parganas* a large portion of the land was either evergrown with stunted woods or had lately been deserted. Even as late as the Mutiny, the country round Jagdīspur was covered with dense jungle in which the mutineers found a secure retreat; and Government was obliged to have it cleared in order to deprive the rebels of their stronghold. The trackless jungle, covering an area of over 25,000 acres, was cleared; and the land is now

entirely under cultivation and supports a numerous and thriving peasantry. The greatest extension, however, of the cultivated area occurred after the introduction of canals; many tracts of sand and jungle were brought under the plough; and the cultivation of rice rapidly increased. In the beginning of the 19th century it was estimated that 2,297 square miles or 56 per cent. of the district were occupied by fields, gardens, plantations and houses; shortly before the completion of the canals, the cultivated area was taken to be 1,690,000 acres or 60 per cent. of the district area; and now the normal area under cultivation is over 1,900,000 acres or 70·25 per cent. of the whole district.

The increase in the production of rice since the inception of the canal system has been most marked, for whereas the area under that crop in 1876 was 800,000 acres, the normal area occupied by it is now nearly 1,300,000 acres. Not less significant has been the development of sugarcane, a crop which has grown immensely in importance of recent years. So great is the necessity of water for its vigorous growth that its cultivation before the era of canals involved almost prohibitive labour on well irrigation; this difficulty was removed by the regular supply of water afforded by the canals; and in the last 30 years the growth of the plant has been widely extended. A powerful stimulus has also been given to the industry by the introduction of the iron roller mills worked by bullock power, invented in 1874 by the proprietors of the Bihiā estate and hence known as the Bihiā mills. Some years indeed elapsed before their great superiority over the rude machines in use was recognized; but the ryot in spite of his conservatism learnt to appreciate their advantages; their popularity is now firmly established; and the old fashioned appliances which necessitated the cutting up of the cane and extracted a mere fraction of the juice are now no longer seen.

The cultivation of poppy has on the other hand decreased, as year by year it is becoming less profitable to the ryots. The plant is delicate; a thoroughly favourable year comes only at uncertain intervals; and the cultivators have had to contend with a number of bad seasons. There is accordingly a marked tendency to withdraw from an industry so precarious and to substitute the more robust cereals or such paying crops as sugarcane, chillies and vegetables. This movement has been quickened by the fact that the value of cereals has increased of recent years, while the price paid for the crude drug remains stationary; and in the last decade the area under poppy has decreased from 30,000 to 16,000 acres (1903-04).

An experimental farm of 30 acres is maintained at Dumraon, at which experiments with manures and new varieties of crops are

Improved methods.

conducted; but even in the neighbouring villages the cultivators are slow to profit by the results attained. Practically the only innovation which has found favour with the people is the Bihiā sugarcane mill mentioned above.

Land Improvement and Agriculturists' Loans Acts.

From the figures given in the Appendix it will be seen that little advantage has been taken of the Land Improvement and Agriculturists' Loans Acts; the only period during which any large sum was advanced was that of the last famine, when Rs. 75,000 was paid to cultivators under the latter Act. These advances are devoted to the purchase of seed, while those made under the Land Improvement Act are spent in *gilandāzi*, *i.e.*, the maintenance and repair of artificial embankments and reservoirs.

CATTLE.

The cattle raised in the district are generally of a very mediocre stamp; little or no care is taken in selecting bulls for breeding, immature or poor specimens being used; and the Brāhmanī, or dedicated, bulls are usually no better than their fellows, though the freedom with which they are allowed to graze keeps them in better condition. The stock has little chance of improvement, as, besides the want of careful and systematic breeding, there is great difficulty in obtaining pasturage. The herds near the hills are driven up to the grazing lands on the plateau, but in the plains all the land available has been given up to cultivation; and the cattle have to be content with the scanty herbage found in the arid fields, or are stall-fed on *khesāri* or chopped rice straw. Attempts have been made to improve the strain; a Hissār bull is kept on the Government estate of Nāsriganj, his services being given free; and the ryots readily buy the cattle bred from the bulls at the Buxar central jail. Apart, however, from the question whether heavy Hissār bulls are fit for serving the light and often feeble cows indigenous to the country, these bulls only affect the strain of cattle in the neighbourhood; and it is reported that no general improvement in the stock can be observed.

Buffaloes are employed for agricultural purposes and for other slow draught work, but chiefly for the milk which they yield in large quantities. Pigs of the usual omnivorous kind are kept by the lowest castes; and goats are bred in almost every village.

The district contains one Veterinary Dispensary at Dumraon, which carries on a useful work and is much appreciated by the public. The most prevalent disease among cattle is rinderpest, which was particularly rife in 1904-05, when it caused no less than 4,226 deaths.

FORESTS.

The only forests in the district are those scattered over the Kaimur hills; the growth, however, is not luxuriant, and there is now no large timber left. The first scientific examination of

these forests appears to have been made in 1872, when an officer of the Forest Department visited the plateau. The result was disappointing; not one tree was met with from which a 20-foot beam could be cut; the height and girth of most of the trees were small, and it was reported that the timber was not worth conserving. The local officers thereupon pointed out that owing to the absence of any system of conservancy in the past, the forests had suffered from reckless clearance and repeated conflagrations, and they urged that it was advisable to develop what remained and to stop the indiscriminate destruction which was going on. As a result of this representation, an Assistant Conservator was sent in 1876 to re-examine the tract; and he reported that though the forest on the Rohtās plateau was inferior, the slopes were fairly wooded, bamboos were plentiful, and the mixed forest contained a fair amount of *sida, persar, khair* and ebony. On the Rehal table-land *sāl* and a considerable growth of ebony was found, and the Bans-i-Khoh valley contained an ebony forest in which that tree grew to fine dimensions. None of the blocks contained much large timber, but there was a fair amount of young growth; and it was held that large timber would be produced if the forests were protected against reckless cutting. The Conservator accordingly recommended that they should be reserved; and Government, having decided to reserve an area of 38 miles divided into 4 blocks (the Rohtās plateau, the Rohtās slopes, the Rehal plateau and the Bans-i-Khoh), a notification was issued in September 1876 declaring them Forest Reserves. It was subsequently ascertained, however, that this notification included areas which were not the property of Government; and it was accordingly cancelled in 1879. Since that time nothing has been done systematically to protect and develop the natural forest growth. The southern half of the Rohtās plateau is almost completely denuded, and even the northern part is very poorly stocked; it is covered for the most part with scrub jungle and there is no continuous area of large timber; but some fine trees grow near the Fort which give the grounds a park-like appearance. On the Rehal plateau there are some patches of fair timber, but the *sāl* is stunted and of small dimensions, and the old trees are gnarled and twisted. Timber of all sorts appears to decay early, and the *sāl* grows in narrow irregular belts interspersed with mixed forest of inferior character. Practically the only article of export is bamboos, which grow in great profusion along the slopes of the hills and plateau.

CHAPTER VI.

IRRIGATION.

THE agricultural prosperity of the district depends on artificial irrigation, without which many tracts would be uncultivated waste, and the land would be unable to grow sufficient food-crops to sustain its population. The three great sources of irrigation are *aharās* or artificial reservoirs, wells and the Son Canals, all of which help to supplement the natural supply of water and to compensate for its inadequacy or untimely distribution.

ARTIFICIAL RESERVOIRS.

The system of irrigation by means of *aharās* is an indigenous method which has been practised from time immemorial, and was clearly developed in order to make the most of a limited rainfall. The country slopes gradually from the south-east corner of the district towards the west and north, with an average fall northwards of 3 feet in the mile. The rain-water quickly runs off this slope; the soil, which consists of old alluvium, is unable to absorb or retain it; and the cultivation of the rice crop, on which the welfare of the people depends, would be impossible, if the water were not impounded. This is effected by means of low embankments thrown up in the depressions lying between the ridges and gentle undulations which break the surface of the country. The long shallow tanks thus formed, which are known as *aharās* or *khazānas* (reservoirs), constitute artificial catchment basins which receive the water coming down from the adjacent lands, and by intercepting the line of drainage, prevent it from flowing off to the north and leaving the soil devoid of moisture. Their utility is further increased in some cases by long water channels (*pains*), constructed to the nearest stream or water-course, which lead into them the water which would otherwise flow past the fields, and thus make them the receptacle of all the water available in the neighbourhood. These reservoirs contain a store of water which in years of ample and well distributed rainfall is available when the crops most need it, *i.e.*, in June to July, when it is absolutely essential for transplanting the paddy, and during the lunar asterism of the *Hathiyā*, in the end of September and beginning of October, when abundant moisture is required for swelling out and maturing the ripening grain. At these periods, and also at

any other time when the rainfall is insufficient for the crops, the water is let out from the *ahará* and distributed among the fields; and these again are enclosed by low banks (*kiārī*), which retain the rain-water or that brought in from the *aharā*, and prevent its escaping until the crop has been thoroughly watered.

The system, though not so complete and extensive as in the neighbouring district of Gayā, serves a very large area, estimated approximately at 600,000 acres. It is admirably adapted for a country with the natural features possessed by Shāhābād, but depends for its success both on an adequate rainfall and on the proper construction and maintenance of the embankments composing the *aharās*. These earthworks are subject to continual wear and tear, and are liable to be swept away by a rush of water if the rainfall is excessive; and the weak point of the system is that only too often they are allowed to fall to ruin, owing either to careless husbandry, or to the neglect and apathy of the landlords where the *bhāoli* system prevails and the zamīndārs are responsible for their upkeep. The essential features of this indigenous method of irrigation and the defect mentioned above attracted the notice of Buchanan Hamilton in the beginning of the 19th century; and his description is, to a large degree, as true to-day as at the time when it was written. According to his account, "Where the assessment has been so high as to excite industry, all along the gentle declivities at some distance from the village have been drawn ditches which serve as reservoirs, receiving the water above and collecting it for the supply of the fields below in occasional droughts. The fields below are, therefore, usually cultivated with rice, while those between the reservoirs and the villages are cultivated with crops that come to maturity in spring and do not require so much water as rice does." The lower parts are, he states, usually called keyari (*kiārī*) or lands divided into plots for preserving water; and the higher parts tar (*tāl*), *i.e.*, the land immediately above the reservoir, which is always covered with water in the rainy season and is cultivated as soon as the water is let out. Both these classes of land were usually let for a share of the crop and generally were very carelessly cultivated; while the forming or repairing of the reservoirs having been neglected in many parts, the crops so often failed that much had either been altogether neglected or had been allowed to run waste. In those parts in which the reservoirs were neglected, the villages stood at great distances, and the ground, except in their immediate vicinity, whether high or low, was only cultivated occasionally and with poor crops of pulse or linseed that did not require watering. Such a failure to keep up the embankments must

even in his time have been very marked, as elsewhere in describing rice as the principal crop of the district, he remarks that the neglect of some zamīndārs in repairing the reservoirs on their estates had diminished the extent of rice cultivation and very much reduced the produce of that grain.

WELLS.

Well water is used very largely for the irrigation of poppy, sugarcane, wheat and other cold-weather crops; and in 1901 it was estimated that 233,000 acres were irrigated from this source. The methods of drawing and distributing it are those common to the whole of Bihār, and here, as elsewhere, the most usual contrivance for lifting the water is the *lātha* or lever. This consists of an upright post which serves as a fulcrum on which a beam works; at one end it is weighted with a log, stone or mass of dried mud, and at the other is a rope with a bucket attached, which, when not in use, rests above the well. When water is required, the cultivator pulls down the rope till the bucket is immersed; as soon as the tension is relaxed, the weight attached to the lever raises the bucket of itself; the water is then emptied and led by narrow channels into the fields. Irrigation by means of the *mot* (leather bucket) is much rarer. When this method is employed, water is raised by a large leather bucket secured to a rope, which passes over a rude wooden pulley supported by a forked post, and is fastened to the yoke of a pair of bullocks. These supply the motive power, for as soon as the bucket has been filled, they descend an inclined plane, varying in length with the depth of the well, and thus bring it to the surface. One man is required to look after the bullocks, and another is stationed on the well to let down the *mot* and empty it when it comes to the surface.

Two other contrivances for raising water may also be mentioned here, the *don* and the *sair*. The *don* is a boat-shaped wooden scoop, attached at one end to a lever which has its fulcrum a little to the side, the lever being weighted at the other extremity with mud. This machine is used for lifting water either from the reservoirs (*aharās*) which are so numerous in the district or from a lower to a higher channel, where water is plentiful and the elevation small. The *sair* is used when the quantity of water remaining is small; it is a triangular basket made of bamboo with the edges raised on two sides; cords are attached to each angle, and these are held by two men, one standing on either side of the ditch from which the water has to be raised.

CANALS.

The two sources of artificial irrigation just mentioned are, however, of minor importance as compared with the Son canal system, which has by far the greatest value as a factor making

for the prevention of famine and the maintenance of continued prosperity among a people so dependent on agriculture and so vitally affected by the vicissitudes of the seasons.

The idea of constructing works which would irrigate the districts bordering on the Son originated in 1853 with the late Colonel C. H. Dickens, who recommended to Government the construction of a series of reservoirs along the foot of the hills to catch the surface drainage and of canals to lead it over the plains country for use during the dry months. Subsequently, as the result of further investigation, he was convinced that the Son should be the source of supply and that the reservoir scheme was of secondary importance; and the subject was under discussion for several years, the preparation of detailed surveys and estimates being seriously interfered with by the Mutiny. Finally, the Government of India decided that the execution of the project should be left to private enterprise, and it was offered to, and accepted by, the East India Irrigation and Canal Company which had already undertaken the Orissa and Midnapore canal works. In 1868, however, the interest of the Company was bought by Government for 10½ lakhs, and the work of construction was commenced in the following year. Sufficient progress had been made in 1873 to allow of water being supplied, through cuts in the banks of the Arrah canal, to relieve the drought of that year; the canals were completed a few years later, and from the year 1876-77 water was supplied on payment of rates in a regular manner. They carry a maximum volume of 6,350 cubic feet per second, and about 80 per cent. of the irrigation lies in the Shāhābād, 11 per cent. in the Gayā, and 9 per cent. in the Patna district.

Canal system.

The system derives its supply from an anicut across the Son at Dehrī, and the general plan of the works comprises a Main Western canal, branching off from it on the left bank, and a Main Eastern canal branching off on the right. The anicut or weir, which is 12,469 feet long, consists of a mass of rubble stone laid to a uniform slope and stiffened by walls of masonry founded on shallow wells. Scouring sluices are provided at either flank; and these are fitted with gates which can be opened or closed at any state of the river other than high flood. By means of these gates the level of the water in the pool above the weir can be kept at the height required to feed the canals. The total cost of the anicut, which was begun in 1869 and finished in 1875, amounted to about 15 lakhs of rupees.

The total length of the main canals is 218 miles, of the branch canals 149 miles, and of the distributaries 1,217 miles; and in Shāhābād there are 132 miles of navigable canals, 149 miles of

canals used for irrigation and 879 miles of distributaries. The area provided with distributaries in this district is 1,813 square miles, the gross area commanded (2,074 square miles) being roughly a triangle having Dehrī for its apex, the East Indian Railway from Koelwār to Chausā for its base, and the river Son and Panjraon branch canal for its sides. The Main Western canal supplies the Arrah, the Buxar and Chausā canals, which all branch off within the first 12 miles, and is continued for a total distance of 22 miles, as far as the Grand Trunk Road, 2 miles beyond Sasarām. Its prolongation for a further distance of 50 miles to the frontier of the district, towards Mirzāpur, was commenced as a relief work during the scarcity of 1874-75, but was never completed. The chief engineering work is the syphon-aqueduct of 25 arches, by which the Kao, a formidable hill torrent, is carried under the canal. The Arrah canal branches off from the Main Western canal at the 5th mile, and follows the course of the Son for 30 miles, when it strikes northwards, running on a natural ridge past the town of Arrah, and finally after a total course of 60½ miles it falls into the Gangi Nadī, a local stream flowing into the Ganges. It is designed for navigation as well as irrigation, but owing to shoals at the point of junction with the main stream of the Ganges, navigation along the Gangi Nadī is only possible during the flood season. To overcome the total fall of 180 feet, 13 locks were constructed, one of which has since been abandoned. Besides four principal distributaries, its main offshoots are the Bihiā canal, 31 miles long, and the Dumraon canal, 40 miles long. The Buxar canal, which is also intended for navigation, leaves the Main Western canal at its 12th mile, and communicates with the Ganges at Buxar, after a course of 45 miles; its main branch, known as the Chausā canal, has a length of 40 miles. The total fall is 159 feet, which is overcome by 12 locks.

Canal revenue. When the construction of the canals was in progress, sanguine hopes of the revenue they would yield were entertained, but the event has proved the fallacy of these early forecasts. In 1875 a yearly irrigated area of 1,043,680 acres was anticipated, and it was estimated that the net profits would amount to Rs. 26,40,530 and yield a return equal to 8·3 per cent. on the capital outlay. It was expected that there would be a large return from navigation receipts; and a considerable sum (estimated at Rs. 66,85,606 or one quarter of the whole capital outlay) was sacrificed in making the canals first class navigation lines. These hopes have been falsified; the supply of water from the Son has proved smaller than was anticipated, the maximum area ever irrigated being 557,494 acres in 1901-02; in the five preceding years the average

was only 463,180 acres, and in 1903-04 it amounted to 505,803 acres. At the same time, the receipts from tolls have equally failed to realize the expectations originally entertained, and they have been still further reduced since 1900 in consequence of the construction of the Mughalsarai-Gayā Railway line. During the four years previous to the opening of that line the navigation receipts averaged Rs. 87,600; but they fell to Rs. 36,507 in 1900-01, and in 1903-04 amounted to only Rs. 22,708. The result has been that these works, so far from being remunerative, have hitherto imposed a large recurring charge on the State. At no time has the rate per cent. on the capital outlay exceeded 3·27, a figure reached only in 1902-03; and at the end of 1903-04 the total capital outlay amounted to Rs. 2,67,22,648, while the net revenue for that year was Rs. 7,86,312, yielding a return of only 2·94 per cent. The interest charges exceeded the net revenue by Rs. 2,19,49,923, and during the three preceding years the average annual excess of interest charges over net revenue amounted to Rs. 3,99,859.

Effects of canal irrigation. This loss, however, is compensated for by the great benefits they have conferred on the tract which they serve. They have afforded it absolute protection against famine; they have increased the profits of cultivation; and they have enlarged the material resources of the community. Even if only their value as protective works and the insurance they afford against famine are considered, their construction has been fully justified. The catchment areas of most *aharās* are small, seldom extending far beyond the village boundary, and, as they depend largely for their utility on the rainfall, the supply is uncertain and very often insufficient. The constant and ample supply of canal water available from the end of June to October presents, therefore, advantages which cannot well be overrated, especially as these reservoirs are liable to fail just when they are most needed, in the beginning or end of the season. The result is that when rainfall is deficient or ill-distributed, the ryots are dependent on the water furnished by the canals, from which they can rely on obtaining enough to save their crops.

Protection from famine. Notwithstanding occasional years of scarcity and consequent distress, there is no record of any famine having ever occurred along the tract of country watered by the canals; and in spite of the fact that the area irrigable has been found to be much less than was originally contemplated, it is still sufficient in years of deficient rainfall to supplement, to a large extent, the failure of the crops in those portions of the district which the canals do not touch. Their great value in this respect has been strikingly

demonstrated on several occasions. During the famine of 1873-74, even though the canals were not completed, the water which was supplied gratuitously from them saved a large portion of the crops. In 1877, a year of scanty rainfall, the prospects were so gloomy that, with a view simply to the production of more food, it was decided, at a certain sacrifice of revenue, to reduce the water-rate for the rice crop from Rs. 2-8 to Re. 1 an acre; and this measure led to a considerable demand for water, and the irrigated *kharīf* rice proved a bumper crop. Again in 1888-89, distress and scarcity would have been the inevitable result of the total failure of the rains in September and October but for these irrigation works; all the *ahārās*, except those with a large catchment area, dried up; the rice crop watered from them yielded an outturn of only a quarter of that given by the crops on canal irrigated lands; and the area irrigated from the canals was only circumscribed by the supply available. Finally, in the last famine of 1896-97, the portion of the district served by the canals was entirely protected by the network of distributaries and village channels and remained immune from famine, when it attacked a large area which had not the benefit of this system of irrigation.

Extension of rice cultivition.

Another noticeable instance of the benefits conferred by the Son Canals is the way in which they have revolutionized the cultivation of the district and increased the production of the valuable rice crop. Before the inception of the system, the ryots were dependent on wells and *ahārās;* the manual labour involved by the first method was immense; and, as has been already shewn, the second depends largely for its utility on the rainfall. Crops requiring large supplies of water, such as rice and sugarcane, were precarious; and the cultivators depended on a vast variety of inferior ones, which yielded a scanty outturn. When the canals were in course of construction, it was found that the lands commanded were about equally divided between *rabi* or winter crops and *kharīf*, which embraces the wet crops and consists almost entirely of rice. The canals and distributaries were ordinarily run on the ridges, the lands bordering which, being dry, were usually cultivated with *rabi* crops, while the *kharīf* crops lay at a lower level in the valleys between the ridges; and it was anticipated that the chief demand for water would be for the former crops. As soon, however, as irrigation from the canals was commenced, there was a rapid change in the character of the cultivation and the growth of rice increased enormously. This change has steadily gone on up to the present time; and wherever canal water is regularly available, *rabi* crops have to a great extent given place

to rice. The character of the soil and the presence or absence of wells appear to have had little or no effect on this result, which apparently was due simply to the possibility of securing a full and regular supply of water without the labour of well irrigation.

The extent to which the area under irrigation has increased and *kharīf* cultivation has developed will be sufficiently demonstrated by the fact that whereas in 1881-82 the area under *kharīf* was only 98,600 acres and that under *rabi* crops was 36,800 acres, in 1901-02 nearly 60 per cent. of the whole irrigation was devoted to the *kharīf* crop; while in 1903-04 the land on which *kharīf* was grown amounted to as much as 369,000 acres, and 110,000 acres were under *rabi*, the average area of each crop in the preceding 5 years being 323,600 and 123,800 acres respectively. In Shāhābād alone out of 399,100 acres irrigated from the canals in 1903-04, no less than 281,580 acres were under *kharīf*, 22,466 acres were under hot-weather crops, principally sugarcane, and 95,100 acres produced *rabi* crops. It is, at first sight, astonishing that the *kharīf* irrigation is not even more extensive than it is, as it is estimated that altogether 707,360 acres are annually irrigable in this district, but this is due to the method of cultivation followed during the *Hathiyā* asterism, *i.e.*, the period generally falling between the 26th September and the 10th October. It is the universal practice of the cultivators to run the water off the rice-fields in September, and after this the crops must get at least one watering during the 14 days covered by the *Hathiyā*. If there is good rain then, the rice will mature unaided; but if on the other hand there is no rain, the demand for canal irrigation is great. The capacity of the canals is thus measured by the maximum area they can irrigate at this period, and it is of no avail irrigating to their full capacity during July and August, if they cannot water the same area at this most critical period in the agricultural year.

Canal administration.

The whole system is under the control of a Superintending Engineer, who is assisted by two Executive Engineers in charge of Divisions. The latter are responsible for the maintenance of the canals, the conduct of irrigation operations and assessments, and a separate establishment is entertained for the collection of the revenue. For this purpose, there is a revenue division in charge of a Special Deputy Collector, who sees to the collection of water-rates under the orders of the Superintending Engineer. The irrigated area under long leases is divided into blocks, the lease of all the lands in each block being arranged so as to lapse in the same year; and in fixing the period of the leases efforts are made to see that leases for an equal area expire each year.

Applications for water are made by the cultivators on a prescribed form, the year being divided into three seasons, that is, hot weather, *kharīf* and *rabi*. A date is fixed for each season, and the lease or permit granted for that season is only in force for that particular period. Besides these season leases, there are long-term leases, or leases for a period of seven years, which provide for the supply of water during the *kharīf* and *rabi* seasons only and are granted at a somewhat reduced rate. These long-term leases are only granted for compact blocks defined by well-marked boundaries of such a nature that the leased lands can be clearly distinguished from the adjoining unleased lands, and also so situated that unleased lands will not be ordinarily irrigated by water supplied for the land included in the block. These boundaries are mentioned in the application for the lease, on receipt of which a special report is submitted to the Sub-divisional Canal Officer. If the lease is likely to be approved, he issues orders for the block to be measured, and a detailed *khasrā*, or measurement of each cultivator's holding, is then made. The lease and the *khationi* or demand statement are finally approved by the Divisional Canal Officer who issues the permit, but before this can be done, every cultivator, who has fields within the block, must sign his name against the area which has been measured and which will be assessed in his name. In order to admit of a block getting water for the first season, a provisional permit is granted for the season on the area originally applied for; this permit is cancelled when the long-lease permit is finally granted. Fields which cannot be ordinarily irrigated, or for which canal water is not ordinarily required, can be excluded from the block, such fields being duly noted in the *khasrā* or measurement paper. In these long-term leases water-rates are charged for the area measured and accepted by the cultivators, whether water is required or not; and the channel by which the area is irrigated must be registered as well as the name of its owner. In *rabi* and hot-weather leases water is supplied on application, and water-rates are levied on the actual areas irrigated, and not necessarily on those specified in the application. In order to assist the Canal Department as far as possible in regulating and distributing the water to the different cultivators named in the leases, *lambardārs* or headmen are appointed; these are influential men of the village, who are appointed in consultation with the cultivators concerned. Their duty is to assist in measurements, to give in the names of the cultivators of the different holdings, and to see that water is properly distributed over the leased area. For these duties they are paid a commission of 3 per cent. of the

total assessment on long leases and of 2 per cent. on season leases.

There are five rates charged for the water supplied, viz., (1) *rabi* season leases from the 15th October to the 25th March at Rs. 2-8 an acre; (2) hot-weather leases from the 25th March to the 25th June at Rs. 4-8 an acre; (3) leases during the same period at Rs. 2 for each watering; (4) *kharif* season leases between the 25th June and the 25th October at Rs. 4 an acre; and (5) seven years' leases for block areas for any kind of crop between the 25th June and the 25th March in the next year at Rs. 3 an acre. When the long lease system was inaugurated, it was calculated that water would be given for 50 per cent. of the whole area of a village; and this portion was marked off into one or more well defined blocks, for the irrigation of which a charge was made at a reduced rate. The cultivator is supplied with water enough for his own block, but he may not use it beyond these limits; and it is, therefore, laid down that there must be a well defined village channel to conduct the water from the distributary, and that it is not to be allowed to escape to an *aharā*. At first, when the canals were opened, water was allowed to fill up the *aharās* and to be drawn thence on to the fields, but as soon as water-rates were claimed, the ryots maintained that they had used only rain and not canal water; and as their allegation could not be disproved, it was found necessary to discontinue the practice of filling *aharās*. Of all these leases the most popular are the long leases, which are given only for the areas for which protection can be assured even in the driest years. The rates for this class of lease were originally fixed at a low figure, owing to the backwardness of the cultivators in resorting to canal irrigation and to the fact that the use of canal water is not indispensable in years of ordinary rainfall; the holders of these leases have preferential claims to water during periods of high demand such as occur in dry seasons; and, as the cultivators have been quick to recognize the advantages of the system, the area under long leases has steadily expanded, until at the present day 75 per cent. of the whole irrigated area receives water on long lease, and the demand for such leases cannot be fully met.

Water-rates.

This sketch of the irrigation system in Shāhābād would be incomplete without a reference to the proposal to extend irrigation works to the Bhabuā sub-division. This sub-division, like a part of Sasarām, is beyond the reach of the Son waters; though 281,000 acres are said to be irrigated from private works, it is still much exposed to drought; and the barrenness of the fields is all the more striking from its contrast to the fertile plains in the

The Karamnā scheme.

neighbourhood. The idea of utilizing the waters of the Karamnāsā to irrigate this area is no recent one, and more than a century ago the Collector of the district suggested the construction of sluices with canals leading into the interior. In 1870 the Chief Engineer, Bengal, left it on record that there was a magnificent site for a large reservoir; and more recently the Indian Irrigation Commission of 1901-03 urged the importance of conducting a survey of the upper portion of its course where it passes through the hills, though they could not admit that the liability of the sub-division to famine was so great as to justify a large unremunerative outlay. In accordance with this representation, a survey was carried out under the orders of the Bengal Government, and a suitable site for a storage reservoir was selected. The drainage area was found to be 370 square miles, and it was estimated that, under the most advantageous conditions, the maximum irrigable area would be 50,000 acres. The cost of this reservoir alone was taken at 65½ lakhs; and it was anticipated that the whole canal system would involve an expenditure of over Rs. 1,28,00,000, that the revenue would not exceed Rs. 1,15,000 per annum, and that the annual loss to Government (excluding interest charges) would be Rs. 2,17,000. It was considered that the necessity for irrigation was not so urgent as to justify the State incurring such a heavy recurring charge, and it was finally decided in 1904 not to proceed with the project.

CHAPTER VII.

NATURAL CALAMITIES.

FLOODS.

IT has already been explained that the low strip of country lying to the north of the district between the embankment of the East Indian Railway and the river Ganges is liable to be inundated every year by the overflow of that river. These floods do no harm, and though cultivation is impossible during the great agricultural season of the rains, this loss is more than compensated by the magnificent *rabi* crops produced in the cold weather from the fertilizing silt they leave. In the beginning of the 19th century, however, such inundations were far from harmless, and the loss of houses, land and other property was considerable. In 1802 three entire villages were destroyed by the encroachments of the Ganges, and the number of trees carried away into the river constituted such a danger to navigation that the Collector of the district proposed that Government should authorize him to cut down all trees likely to be swept away during the ensuing rains.

The most destructive inundations are caused by the Son; and considerable damage has been done on various occasions in the low-lying plains of Shāhābād by the flood water overflowing the country between Nanaur and Arrah. Such extraordinary floods are fortunately of comparatively rare occurrence and of very short duration. The most serious of those in the 19th century occurred in 1848, 1864, 1867, 1876, 1884, 1888, and 1892; and finally the year 1901 witnessed the highest flood recorded in the district. The flood of 1864, though not so high as that of 1848 when the flood-level at Akbarpur reached 20 feet, spread over a vast tract of country; the water rushing down from Akbarpur overflowed the bank of the river between that place and Koelwār, and escaping inland towards Arrah through a depressed valley a quarter of a mile south of the village of Bihiārah, inundated an area of 250 square miles. In 1876 the flood was even more severe; the first spill occurred at Andhari and cut the Kaithi distributary, and below that spot the Koelwār distributary was breached in nine places. At Sundari the flood finally rushed inland with overwhelming force and spread over the face of the country as far as Arrah, 8 miles distant; on reaching the

last 2 miles of the Arrah canal, it made a clean sweep through the banks, breaking them in 17 places on the left and in 23 on the right side. It is probable that only this sweeping away of the canal banks saved the railway embankment, as between Koelwār and Arrah there was not sufficient waterway to carry off the water. No lives were lost, but great damage was done to property in the town of Arrah and in the neighbouring *parganas*. This flood, like its predecessors, was of short duration, as it subsided 52 hours after its commencement; the inundation of 1864 only lasted half as long; while that of 1867 continued for 39 hours. The highest flood-levels recorded at Akbarpur during these four floods are shown in the margin.

		Feet.
June 24th, 1848	...	20
September 12th, 1864	...	16·52
September 19th, 1867	...	16·15
July 7th, 1876	...	19·25

The great inundation of 1901 was due to a simultaneous rise of both the Son and the Ganges. On the 1st September the level of the Son at the Koelwār bridge was only 9 feet, but by the morning of the 3rd idem it had reached the height of 17·6 feet; and the river continuing to rise throughout the night and all through the next day, the gauge showed the unprecedented flood-level of 22 feet by 2 A.M. on the 5th September. At the same time owing to a high Himalayan flood, the Ganges was rising abnormally high, and on the morning of the 5th September the flood-level of that river also was higher than any previously recorded, the gauge at Dīgha reading 35·10 feet in the early morning and 35·60 at midday. The Son being thus unable to discharge the volume of its waters into the Ganges, forced its way over its western bank and poured over the low-lying lands towards Arrah. The canal bank was breached in several places; the flood poured into many parts of Arrah destroying some of the small hamlets on its outskirts; and the whole country between that town and the bed of the Son and on both sides of the railway line from Bihtā was a sheet of water, which in some places attained a breadth of 17 miles. No loss of life, however, occurred, and the number of cattle drowned was inconsiderable. House property on the other hand suffered seriously, and it was reported that over 7,000 houses were destroyed; some damage was done to the standing *bhadoi* crops, but this loss was more than compensated by the rich deposit of silt left by the receding waters and by the benefit done to the paddy, which in many parts was dying for want of water. In the event, it was found only necessary to relieve some of the poorer classes whose houses and stocks of grain had been swept away; and Rs. 819, which had been raised by public subscription, was distributed among them.

FAMINES. Droughts arising from deficient rainfall were frequent in former years before the present extensive system of irrigation had been introduced and the means of communication improved. Four times in the decade preceding the completion of the canals—in 1864, 1865, 1866 and 1869—droughts seriously affected the general harvest and twice culminated in scarcity, while the bad state of communications in the interior aggravated the local distress.

Famine of 1866. The first of these was the famine of 1866, which, coming as it did after the resources of the poorer classes had been exhausted by bad harvests in the two previous years, caused considerable loss of life. With the exception of the strip of country lying between the line of railway and the river Ganges, which is subject to inundation and retains sufficient moisture for the growth of spring crops, and of an area of about 750 square miles in the south, which receives the drainage of the Kaimur hills, the district generally suffered in both these years from insufficient rainfall; and in *parganas* Chausā, Pīru, Chainpur, Nanaur and Panwar the rice crop on which the country mainly depends is said to have failed to the extent of from five-eighths to three-fourths of the outturn of an average season. The failure of the crops in 1864 led to the rapid exhaustion of local stores of grain; and towards the end of 1865, the district, which in ordinary years exports to a considerable extent, was mainly dependent on imported grain for the support of its population. The almost complete failure of the rice crop in 1865, therefore, immediately caused very general and severe distress; the price of all cereals rose to more than double the rates prevailing at the corresponding period in 1863; whilst fourfold the customary rates were demanded for barley, peas and gram, which are much consumed by the poorest classes. No special relief measures were commenced, however, till the beginning of June 1866, when employment was given to the distressed labouring classes in the repair of roads in the sub-divisions of Sasarām and Bhabuā; and in July relief committees were opened at the head-quarters stations and at six other places. The average daily number of persons relieved when the distress was greatest amounted in August to 2,480, and in September to 2,979, while the average number of persons employed in road repairs was 868 in the former and 1,662 in the latter month. Government relief measures were supplemented by private liberality; but the number of deaths from starvation, as reported by the police, amounted to 3,161, and this figure is believed to be far below the actual number. There can be little doubt but that relief was both

inadequate and much too long delayed. The people suffering the greatest distress were spread over an area of upwards of 1,000 square miles; to relieve these, only seven centres were established, exclusive of those at Arrah, Bībīganj and Buxar, which were too distant to apply local relief to what may be termed the famine tract; and the pauper population had been reduced to the extremity of striving to support life on roots, leaves and grass before any measures were adopted for their succour. The highest price of rice during this famine is reported to have been 9 seers a rupee.

Scarcity of 1869. The scarcity of 1869, following as it did a succession of bad years, also caused much distress in Shāhābād, and was aggravated by the badness of the roads. Relief measures had to be organized, the able-bodied being employed on the roads, while the old and infirm were formed into beggar squads, who were paid daily for such light work as their infirmities enabled them to perform.

Famine of 1874. The next great famine from which the district suffered occurred after an interval of only 5 years, during which the people had had little time to recover from the previous scarcity. The year 1873 was the last of a series of three years which were marked by abnormal rainfall and generally unusual weather. The year 1871 was unusually wet; the following year was equally dry; while in 1873 the rainfall was deficient almost beyond precedent; the registered fall at Arrah in these 3 years being 62·43, 34·64 and 32·95 inches, respectively. Notwithstanding the abnormal character of the weather in 1871 and in 1872, the crops in those years were good. In 1871 the heavy and early rains so retarded the transplantation of rice that at one time there were grave apprehensions regarding the outturn of the crops; but these forebodings were later on replaced by more sanguine expectations, which were eventually realized. In 1872 the rainfall, though deficient, was so seasonably distributed that there resulted a good *bhadoi* crop, and a fair winter rice and *rabi* crop. In fact, the condition of the district in the summer of 1873 was much as usual, and it entered unweighted into the struggle which ensued. The summer and autumn rains of 1873 were deficient by 14½ inches, and this deficient fall, unlike the almost equally short fall in the preceding year, was most unfavourably distributed. The rains commenced late, were concentrated in July and August, and ceased altogether early in September at that most important period of the year when the rice-plant shooting into ear requires abundant moisture to fill out and develop the grain. The early rice crop of 1873 turned out to be only one-fourth of an average crop, while one-eighth of the great

winter rice crop alone was saved. The anxiety and suspense which affected the public mind in the closing days of 1873 and the commencement of 1874 were naturally reflected in the condition of trade. The disastrous season of 1865-66 was within the vivid recollection of most people; and the remembrance of it, amid circumstances of season even more disastrous, had a marked effect on prices, and especially on the price of rice, which in February 1874 ranged higher than it did at the corresponding period of 1866. The energy displayed by private enterprise was marvellous. The railway poured grain into the district from the North-West Provinces and the Punjab. In the months of January and February, Shāhābād received 2,866,766 maunds, or 102,305 tons, of food-grain, exclusive of 3,332 tons consigned by Government; but much of this was despatched across the river to Sāran, and some found its way into Gayā district. From the unfinished channels of the Son Canals 159,000 acres of land in this district and in Gayā were irrigated, and 70,000 tons of winter and spring grain, which would otherwise probably have perished, were saved. In the existence of these works Shāhābād possessed an advantage over all other distressed districts, except Sāran, as they afforded organized labour at a time when organized labour was not procurable elsewhere, and in this way had a very beneficial effect on the condition of the district. But in spite of these advantages, prices continued to rise till June, when common rice stood at 10 seers to the rupee. It would indeed have gone very much higher but that in March and April an abundant harvest of wheat and pulses was reaped. These crops, which from the commencement promised more favourably in Shāhābād than elsewhere in the Patna Division, were above the average in the Arrah and Buxar sub-divisions, where the crops on the river-side lands were particularly good; and in other parts they yielded a good outturn. Prices, however, remained throughout the year from 50 to 80 per cent. over normal rates—a state of things necessitating the continuance of relief works. As far as charitable relief, however, was concerned, Government found that, having due regard to the claims of the aged and indigent, to whom such exceptional prices meant the denial of private charity, it could transfer 1,390 tons of the original consignment for Shāhābād to other more distressed districts.

During the famine 287 tons of rice were distributed in charitable relief; 545 tons were paid as wages of labour; 158 tons were advanced as loans; and 3,153 tons were sold for cash. Besides this, Rs. 33,566 was distributed in charitable relief, Rs. 17,437 was advanced on loan and Rs. 1,89,373 paid away as wages. In

January 2,227 labourers were employed daily on relief works, 6,290 in April, 10,074 in May, 4,407 in July and 2,996 in September, when this form of relief was closed. In the beginning of May charitable relief began to be given freely, 2,361 persons being daily supplied with food at that period and 3,166 towards the end of that month. The number fell to 647 in the middle of June, but rose to 2,965 in the middle of July and continued near this high average till the end of September, after which month little relief of this kind was called for. The autumn and winter crops in 1874 yielded full harvests, though an extraordinary flood of the Dargautī river burst through the Grand Trunk Road and did considerable damage. The spring crop of 1875 was above the average and the effects of the scarcity soon disappeared.

Famine of 1896-97.

Owing to the protection afforded by the irrigation works, a long interval ensued before Shāhābād again felt the stress of famine; and it was not till 1896-97 that any portion of the district again suffered from a calamity of this nature. The rainfall in the preceding year was very deficient, especially in the Sasarām and Bhabuā sub-divisions, and the whole district received only 71·4 per cent. of the normal fall. A very large tract, however, was served by irrigation from the Son Canals, and the greater part of the Sasarām sub-division, the south of the Buxar, and much of the Sadar sub-division were thus protected; while in the high lands to the north, on which *rabi* grows, the failure of the rains was not wholly disastrous as they received their full share of the winter showers. In the event, the *bhadoi* for the whole district was estimated at 7 annas, the *aghani* at 4 annas, and the *rabi* at 11 annas of the normal crop, the total outturn being less than half of an ordinary year. Prices here, as elsewhere, ruled very high, but considerable stocks were held by the cultivators; and eventually no part was really distressed except the Bhabuā sub-division and the southern portion of the Sasarām sub-division, an area comprising 1,632 square miles and containing a population of 382,000 souls.

This tract consists of two sharply defined portions—the hills and the plains. The whole of the south of the Bhabuā sub-division and much of the southern portion of Sasarām is occupied by the Kaimur range with an area of 700 square miles and a population of 20,000 persons. Here the crops are poor and precarious, and depend greatly on the rains, for with the exception of a few village wells and still fewer tanks there is no provision for a water supply. Food-supplies are brought up from the plains through difficult passes, which, always impassable for wheeled traffic, become closed even to pack-bullocks when

the monsoon once sets in. Rice is the principal crop, but the people live from hand to month and are accustomed in time of dearth to eke out their subsistence with the products of the jungle; these natural resources stood them in good stead when the rice crops failed, and helped to alleviate the subsequent distress. The remainder of the distressed tract comprised the plains part of the Bhabuā sub-division and the Chenāri outpost in Sasarām. Of this, the portion falling north of the Grand Trunk Road, in which *rabi* is mainly cultivated, was not severely affected, but distress was much more acute in the tract lying between that road and the hills. This tract is characterized by very poor soil growing hardly anything but *aghani* rice; there is little or no irrigation; the cultivators are inexpert and impoverished; and the physique of the people is poor and their general condition bad.

In the affected area the harvests of 1895-96 had been poor, and in 1896 the winter rice crop, on which the cultivators mainly depend, had an outturn of only 10 annas. This was succeeded by an equally poor *rabi* crop, as there was almost an entire absence of rainfall from October 1895 to June 1896, the fall being only 0·26 inch; and the people could only hope to recover if the monsoon was up to its usual strength. These hopes were doomed to disappointment; at Bhabuā there were only 18·82 inches as against a normal fall of over 40 inches; the rains practically stopped before the end of August; and the rice crop was a total failure. To add to the distress, the *rabi* harvest of 1896-97 was damaged by caterpillars and was only a 6 to 7 annas crop, though even this poor outturn mitigated the severity of the famine in the Chenāri outpost and the country lying north of the Grand Trunk Road.

The rains of 1896-97 began a fortnight late, not commencing till the last week of June, heavy rain followed early in July, and then two long periods of drought ensued, of about a month each, lasting till the middle of August and the middle of September, respectively. As day after day passed in July and early August with brilliant sunshine and no sign of rain, apprehension began to be felt, for the *bhadoi* was withering, the seed-beds of rice were drying up, and large tracts of rice land were still unplanted, while the broadcast rice was dying. By the middle of August, prices, though still low, had risen a couple of seers, and the absence of employment on agricultural operations was beginning to make its effects felt. Soon afterwards, however, there was a good burst of rain, and though the deficiency was not made up, the outlook grew brighter and by the end of the month prices were falling again, and the fear of immediate distress had

disappeared. But at this very time the second of the long periods of drought had already commenced, marked by hot weather with dry west winds, and hardly any rain fell anywhere till the middle of September: these circumstances completely altered once more the aspect of affairs, and it became apparent that nothing but good rain in the *Hathiyā* asterism (September 28th to October 8th) could save the rice and give sufficient moisture for the *rabi*.

These hopes proved delusive; the *Hathiyā* passed away without a drop of rain, the hot west winds continued, and a failure of the rice was assured. At the same time agents were buying grain largely in all the big markets, with the object of exporting it to the westward, those who held stocks began to close their sales, and emigration was unusually large. In these circumstances, prices rose with a bound, and in the first few days of October there was great excitement and fear of grain riots, similar to those which had actually occurred shortly before this time in other parts of India. There was much apprehension in Arrah, where the dealers suspended retail sales, but no overt acts of rioting were committed, and after this violent rise prices steadied down. A fortnight later, when still no rain had fallen, there could be no doubt that the rice crop was doomed; the price of rice had risen to 9 seers to the rupee; and by this time the south of the district was seriously affected. In the Bhabuā sub-division there was a sudden increase of crime, several cases having occurred in which the houses of the well-to-do people in a village were broken into and the grain stores carried off; and at the end of the month it was decided to open relief works.

Rice remained at famine prices, being sold during the greater part of the famine at 8 seers and falling from June to August 1897 as low as 7 seers to the rupee; and it was not found possible to close the relief works till July 1897. During this period altogether 560,031 adult males were employed on piece-work and 175,105 on a daily wage, Rs. 74,000 being paid as wages These works were supplemented by gratuitous relief on a large scale; weekly grain doles were given from the second week of January 1897 till the 25th September 1897; poor-houses and kitchens were opened; and, in all, 4,147,626 persons obtained gratuitous relief, the percentage of men, women and children being 19·2, 46·5 and 34·3 respectively, and the amount expended being Rs. 1,96,000. The daily average of persons in receipt of this form of relief was no less than 4·47 per cent. of the population in the affected area, and the largest number gratuitously relieved at any one time amounted to 6·4 per cent. of the people. This

high percentage was due to several causes; the system of gratuitous relief and the relief works were not thoroughly organized till February 1897, and the people were consequently in poor condition; large numbers of the bread-winners had left their homes; and finally the inhabitants of the country most severely affected are of poor physique, and among the men lameness and paralysis are very common. The total cost of the famine operations was Rs. 3,36,000, of which Rs. 30,000 was met from District funds, and besides this the sum of Rs. 25,000, contributed by the Bengal Provincial Committee of the India Famine Relief Fund, was spent in relieving distressed *pardānashīn* ladies. No deaths occurred from starvation, but owing to the ravages of cholera and small-pox and to the greater prevalence of fever in the autumn of 1897, the mortality in the distressed area was nearly 3½ per mille greater than in the whole district.

CHAPTER VIII.

RENTS, WAGES AND PRICES.

RENTS. RENTS in Shāhābād generally vary according to the class of soil, and any attempt to deduce the prevailing rent rates is further complicated by the fact that rents are paid in kind throughout a considerable portion of the district. Enquiries were made on this point in 1895 by an officer who was placed on special duty for this and other purposes, but the statistics obtained were fragmentary and of little importance; more recently the *batwārā* and settlement records were examined with the same object, but investigation failed to elicit anything more definite as to the rents actually paid in irrigated and non-irrigated areas; and until a survey is conducted and a record of rights prepared under the Bengal Tenancy Act, it is impossible to furnish any information as to rent rates on which reliance can be placed. It is, however, known that there has been a tendency to enhance the rents both in irrigated and non-irrigated areas on account of the rise in the prices of the staple crops and the improvement of communications. The largest increase took place after the advent of the canals, and in 1889 it was estimated that in the 13 years following their construction the enhancement amounted to 30 per cent. Enquiry has shewn that the increase in rent has been slightly greater in irrigated lands and villages than in those which obtain no irrigation from the canal system, but that, on the whole, it has not been equal to the rise in the value of the food-crops obtained. In the last 30 years there has admittedly been a large rise in the price of grains, and the cash value of the produce of the fields has therefore increased considerably; but cash rents have not advanced to a corresponding extent, and the growth in the value of the produce has outstripped whatever enhancement may have been made in them.

	Rs.
1877	... 54,94,660
1890	... 71,85,116
1902	... 75,85,116
1904	... 78,31,584

The marginally-noted figures show the rentals for the whole district as found at the road cess valuations at 4 periods, viz., in 1877 just as the canals were commencing, in 1890, in 1902 when a revaluation was effected, and in 1904; they tend to show that the zamīndārs obtained a large increase in their rentals between 1877 and 1890, but that in th

next 14 years they obtained a comparatively small addition to their incomes. By far the greater part therefore of this increase appears to be due to the conversion of inferior and waste lands into rice-fields which took place on the opening of the canals, and not to a general enhancement of rents. A large portion of the enhanced rents have, moreover, been intercepted by the tenure-holders, of whom there are as many in this district as there are estates; while a considerable number of tenants are protected by custom from enhancement, such as *guzashtādārs*, Brāhmans and Rājputs, whose rent, unlike that of other ryots, does not depend on the fertility of their lands and who generally pay less than the lower castes.

SYSTEMS OF RENT PAYMENT.

Rents are paid either in cash (*nagdī*) or in kind (*bhāoli*). The former system prevails everywhere in the case of special crops, such as poppy, sugarcane and potatoes, and is adopted for all crops throughout the northern *parganas* of the district. The latter system is common in the Sasarām and Bhabuā sub-divisions, where it is a natural outcome of the indigenous system of irrigation prevailing in that portion of the district.

The *bhāoli* system.

It has already been explained that Shāhābād owes not only its fertility, but almost its very existence as an agricultural country to artificial irrigation; and that extensive irrigation works are necessary to render rice cultivation possible. The construction of these works requires a large expenditure which the ryots themselves would be unable to afford, and this duty has, therefore, necessarily devolved upon the only capitalist available, the landlord. Without *aharās*, the tenant in many parts would get no rice crops; and on the other hand, if he paid a fixed cash rent to his landlord, the latter would be in a position to spend the money in other ways and to neglect the duty of throwing up embankments and keeping them in order. Custom has therefore decreed that these works shall be made and maintained by the landlord, each tenant paying his quota of the expense by giving a certain proportion of the harvest as rent; the result of this arrangement is that the amount of the landlord's rent depends entirely on the extent to which he provides facilities for irrigating the land. The actual produce of the land varies in proportion with the extent to which the zamīndār incurs expenditure on irrigation; and rents are accordingly paid in kind for lands benefited by any irrigation works maintained either wholly or in part at the zamīndār's expense; the profits of the latter are directly affected y the outturn, and an assurance is thus afforded that he will not glect to spend money on their upkeep. In this way, if the llord does not bear what are called *gilandāzi* charges, *i.e.*, does

not maintain the reservoirs properly, the crop is an entire failure and he gets nothing; while if he spends an adequate amount on such works, a good harvest is reaped and he gets a fair outturn for his outlay.

Dānā-bandi. The share which the landlord receives is determined either by *dānābandi*, or appraisement, or by *batāi*, *i.e.*, by the actual division of the crops on the threshing-floor. In the former case, the division of the produce has passed into an estimate of the value of the crop before it is cut, the produce of each field being estimated by appraisers (*sālis*) while the crop is standing. Before the landlord's share is determined, a deduction is made from the whole estimated produce, which may be as low as 10 per cent., but usually amounts to 20 per cent. of the whole; and all the expenses of harvesting and the customary allowances made to village artisans, menials, &c., are supposed to be paid from this deduction. The landlord's share, which is generally one-half of the balance, is handed over to him after the crop is threshed, either in grain or in cash, and is usually equivalent to 40 per cent. of the value of the gross yield of grain estimated at the current village price at harvest time.

Batāi. When, however, either party is dissatisfied with the estimate made by the appraisers, resort is had, even in villages in which the *dānābandi* system is usual, to the other method of *batāi*, or actual division of the crops. Under this system, the harvesting expenses and village allowances are paid in kind, and a deduction of 5 per cent., or sometimes 10 per cent., of the remainder is made in favour of the ryot before the grain is divided between the landlord and tenant. The deductions for harvesting expenses and village allowances vary very much, but they are usually as follows:—(1) The reapers are allowed to take one out of every 20 *bojhās* (sheaves) off the field; they have the privilege of choosing their own sheaves and of course select the largest; and besides this, each reaper takes one *pānjā* (half a *bojhā*) on the last harvest day for every plough the ryot has. (2) One *pānjā* per plough is given to each of the following village menials, &c.:—the Chamār, Hajjām, Māli, Barhi, Bhāt, Halālkhor and Brāhman priest. (3) One *bojhā* per plough is taken off the threshing-floor before threshing commences by the Chamār, Hajjām, Lohār and Barhi jointly. (4) One *kachchā* maund in 21 is allowed after the grain is threshed and winnowed to those who perform those processes; and (5) two *kachchā paseri* per 100 maunds are given to the priest, and also to the *gorait*, *i.e.*, one-half per cent. in all. Besides this, when the grain is heaped up for division after winnowing, a portion, mixed with the dust of the threshing-floor

and the chaff, is left aside for the ryot. This allowance (*tari-agwar*) represents about 5 per cent., or sometimes, when the ryot is influential or of high caste, as much as 10 per cent. of the grain.

Taking all three harvests (*aghaṇi*, *bhadoi*, and *rabi*) into consideration, the customary deductions are estimated to amount to 19·56 per cent. of the grain yield, which is as a rule distributed as follows:—

		Per cent.
(*a*) Harvesting expenses	...	10·72
(*b*) Customary village allowances	...	4·67
(*c*) *Tari-agwar* to the ryot	...	4·17
		19·56

The landlord's share is calculated on the balance (80·44 per cent. of the yield) and is therefore the same whether it is arrived at by the *dānābandi* or *batāi* system. The division is usually half and half, but there is no uniformity in this respect, the landlord's share in some villages being four-ninths, and in many seven-sixteenths, while in a few it is only two-fifths. There is, however, one circumstance which results in the landlord's share being somewhat diminished, viz., the custom by which the ryot gets all the straw and chaff; and consequently what they actually divide is 80 per cent. of the outturn of grain, and not 80 per cent. of the gross yield When, therefore, the landlord gets one-half, his share represents 40 per cent. of the outturn of grain; where it is four-ninths, he gets 35½; where it is seven-sixteenths, the percentage is 35; and where he gets two-fifths, his share represents only 32 per cent. of the grain yield.

From the preceding account, it will be clear that the *bhāoli* system depends largely on the co-operation of landlords and tenants. For its complete success, it is necessary that the interests of both parties should be identical, that the zamīndār should not be an absentee landlord, and that he should conscientiously provide the outlay of capital necessary to keep up or create an adequate water-supply. In practice, however, the landlord often evades his share of the responsibility, and the complicated method of appraisement and division naturally results in a vast amount of peculation and mutual friction. Endless bickerings are the rule, and the apportionment of the crop leaves a wide door open to fraud and oppression. Besides this, the system is open to the grave objection that it engenders slovenly cultivation. The incentives to industry are not so strong as in the case of *nagdi* Working of the *bhāoli* system.

land, as the tenant receiving only half the produce has only half the usual motives for exertion, and will not devote time and trouble to improving the land. Even in the beginning of the 19th century, Buchanan Hamilton, noticing this feature of the system, observed that the peasant confined his attention to the valuable lands near the village for which he paid a money rent, and "in the intervals of labour" cultivated in a careless manner the lands let to him for a share of the crops. This inefficient style of cultivation is much more marked on third and fourth-rate land than on the better qualities of soil; but even in the latter case the cultivator, knowing that he will not get all the profits of his industry, frequently does not care to turn up and pulverize the soil, apply manure, irrigate the crop, and generally take that trouble which he would take had he not to share the increased yield with another.

Money rents are, however, paid even in *bhāoli* villages for land growing crops which require special care and expense; and this is generally the case with all homestead land, as it is peculiarly adapted for the growth of special crops. On poorer soils which are difficult to work or irrigate, the economic disadvantages of the *bhāoli* system become more apparent, and land of this kind may sometimes remain uncultivated when a crop would have been brought to maturity upon it, were it liable to a fixed money-rent. These are grave defects; but after all the *bhāoli* system is justified by necessity, it suits the circumstances of the people, and it is preferred by many ryots, because even if they get no crop, they pay no rent and are not harassed by arrears of rent in bad years.

In Buchanan Hamilton's time this system prevailed all over Shāhābād, but since then the greater part of the land has been converted into *nagdi*; and there is a steady tendency to convert produce rents to cash. The process is gradual; and even in the canal irrigated area, many villages are still held entirely on the *bhāoli* tenure, while in many more produce rents are paid for large portions of the cultivated area, and especially for rice-growing land. On the whole, however, the change to cash rents is exten[d]ing steadily as the people realize the difficulties and disadvantag[es] inherent in such a complicated method of rent recovery; the Son canal irrigation system, which affords the ryot a certain supply of water independent of the zamīndār, has done much in this direction; and for the greater part *bhāoli* rents are now paid either for inferior lands or only for those lands in which cultivation depends entirely on the landlord maintaining irrigation works.

WAGES. Statistics of the wages given for certain selected classes of labour and the rates current during the decade 1892—1902 will

found in the Appendix. On the whole, there has been a rise in the price of labour during the last 30 years, which is probably due to a great extent to such special causes as the construction of the Son Canals and, more recently, of the Mughalsarai-Gayā line of railway. Before the opening of the canal works, masons, carpenters and blacksmiths received from 3 to 4 annas a day; but the demand for labour created by this scheme resulted in a considerable rise of wages. Masons began to earn 4 to 4¾ annas, carpenters 4 to 6 annas and blacksmiths from 4¾ to 6 annas daily; and similarly, unskilled labourers, who usually got from 1½ to 2 annas, found that they could command 2 to 2½ annas as their daily wage. From the table in the Appendix it will be seen that since that time wages have remained practically stationary, except when the construction of the Mughalsarai-Gayā line created a special temporary demand for labour on a large scale.

Generally speaking, however, skilled labour commands a somewhat higher value in towns than it did formerly. Among masons, carpenters and blacksmiths the wage shows an upward tendency; the silversmith charges a higher rate for his workmanship; the shoemaker and the tailor have raised their tariff; and there is a similar tendency among domestic servants. The rise is small and gradual, but is observable all the same; and it appears to be due to a combination of circumstances such as the advance in the standard of comfort among natives of the better class, the increased use of machinery, and the growing number of well-to-do residents occupying houses of more or less architectural pretensions along the line of railway.

Outside urban areas the wages of labour maintain much the same level from year to year; and in the case of unskilled labour their measure is usually the minimum amount required to afford means of subsistence. Fortunately, however, wages in the villages are usually paid wholly or partly in kind; even the village artisan receives grain for the services he renders; and the field labourer generally gets the whole of his wage—usually 3 seers a day for a man, 2½ for a woman and 1½ for a child—in one or other of the inferior grains such as millets or coarse unhusked rice. This system is particularly suited to an agricultural country like Shāhābād as it has the advantage of being unaffected by any rise in the price of food-grains. Whatever the fluctuations in the price of these in the market, the labourer's wage remains the same.

PRICES.

A statement of the prices current in each sub-division during the years 1893—1902 is given in the Appendix. It is interesting to compare these prices with those obtaining a little more than a

century* before, when even the finest kind of rice sold at 31 to 44 seers and paddy at 95 to 129 seers per rupee, while the price of wheat ranged from 55 to 64 seers and of gram from 72 to 104 seers per rupee. The prices of grain have risen enormously during the last hundred years; but on the other hand there has been a very great growth in the income of all classes, and during the last generation the development of communications has had the effect of levelling prices over larger and larger areas. The loss of one or even two crops of the year has therefore a tendency to become less and less felt, as well as the effect of failures in isolated tracts. Up to the end of last century there was only one line of railway running through the two sub-divisions of Arrah and Buxar, but another line has recently been added which penetrates the Sasarām and Bhabuā sub-divisions; and the great trade route of the Ganges, the canals and the network of roads admirably supplement the work of the railway. There is consequently less variation in prices between various parts of the district than formerly, when the railway only tapped the north of the district and the prices of food-grains varied directly with the distance of the markets from it. Besides this, the vast majority of labour is of an agricultural character and is paid in kind, and immemorial custom has fixed the amount thereof, so that the high prices of grain affect a large section of the community less than would otherwise be the case. To this it should be added that the rural population keep large stores of grain and are, therefore, to a certain extent protected from the distress consequent on scarcity and the rising price of food.

MATERIAL CONDITION. The material condition of the peasantry varies according to localities, and also according to the position and circumstances of their landlords. The most prosperous tenantry are perhaps to be found in the rich tract of alluvial soil lying north of the railway in the head-quarters and Buxar sub-divisions. A great deal of this belongs to the Dumraon Rāj, and an absence of middlemen and petty landlords goes far towards ensuring the comfort of the people, while most of the ryots, who belong to a more independent class than in other parts, have acquired *guzashtā* rights over their fields. The residents of the *diāra* villages are specially well off; the labour of tilling the land is almost nil, the seed only requires to be scattered, and the soil impregnated with rich Gangetic loam yields a heavy crop. South of the railway line conditions are more varied. There are a large

* For a list of the prices current in 1781 and 1782, two average years, see Early English Administration of Bihar by J. R. Hand, pp. 61-62.

number of petty proprietors among whom estates have been divided and sub-divided, and at each division an attempt is made to enhance the ryot's rent. The ryots in this part have also to pay canal water-rates, while those in the northern tract have the advantage of excellent crops without the cost of irrigation. The canals, on the other hand, have led to th extended cultivation of sugarcane, which is a profitable crop, and, on the whole, the ryots in this part of the district are fairly well off and prosperous. In the Chausā *pargana* they are not so well off ; the soil is less fertile and estates are split up among a number of petty proprietors; many of the cultivators are indebted, and a good deal of the land is said to be falling into the possession of *mahājans.*

In the Sasarām sub-division there are numerous petty proprietors, who are generally indigent and are often partly cultivators. The steady rise in prices, accompanied as it has been for many years by only a slight rise in rent, is gradually exterminating this class. They cling to the land as long as possible and mortgage their properties up to the hilt rather than sell any portion of them, but everything points to the gradual disappearance of the old class of petty zamīndār and to the transfer of their lands to the *mahājan* or their absorption in the estates of the larger proprietors. The ryots have suffered from the minute sub-division of property, and afe said to be best off in the northern part of the sub-division, where the soil is more fertile and the land is held to a great extent by two large proprietors, the Dumraon Rāj and the Rājā of Surajpura. In the Bhabuā sub-division, where agricultural conditions are adverse, capital is scarce and the people are impoverished. The cultivators are inert and apathetic; they take no steps to improve their lands and are content to obtain a bare livelihood from the soil; the zamīndārs are in poor circumstances, many of them being seriously involved; and the incidence of the land revenue in proportion to the rental is higher than elsewhere.

Indebtedness. There is a general consensus of opinion as to the wide prevalence of indebtedness ;* but this is a natural incidence of the low state of civilization attained, and in the absence of details as to its nature and amount, it is scarcely possible to state that it represents any great degree of poverty. The ryot, though he generally keeps a certain amount of grain in store, is often improvident ; and the custom of the country makes heavy expenditure on social ceremonies

* For a fuller discussion of the question of indebtedness, *see* Memorandum on the Material Condition of the People of Bengal in the years 1892-93 to 1901-02 by L. P. Shirres, C.S.

obligatory. For these reasons, agriculture like other industries is supported on credit, and the *mahājan* is as essential to the village as the ploughman. Some of the ryot's debt is owed to the shopkeeper who sells grain, or to the *mahājan* or landlord for advances to purchase food while the harvest is ripening, and such accounts are usually closed when the harvest is reaped; some is contracted, more particularly if the harvest promises to be a bumper one, for the purpose of marriages; and some debts are business transactions closely connected with agriculture, *e.g.*, for the purchase of seed, ploughs or cattle, or for extending cultivation or making agricultural improvements.

Landlords and tenants. In the district generally the zamīndārs are not well off, though there are a few prosperous landlords with extensive estates and large rent-rolls. As a class, they are losing status from the minute sub-division of property, and this system is a fruitful source of evil both to landlords and tenants. A large number of the petty proprietors are impoverished, and their condition naturally reacts on their tenants, towards whom they are often oppressive and exacting. Among the latter there is a numerous class of well-to-do peasantry, especially on the bigger estates, who can hold their own for some time even in seasons of scarcity. Below these come a still larger class, whose condition depends entirely upon the crops of the year. Some of these are tenants with small holdings, many of whom are driven to take land in the neighbouring villages as sub-tenants on what are practically rack-rents; while others have to supplement their resources by working as labourers. The former are more common in those parts of the district where the soil is fertile and rents have been screwed up to a high pitch, and the latter in the southern tracts where the rainfall is light, capricious and often unfavourable, and where there are no non-agricultural industries which would serve as an outlet for superfluous labour. The number of sales of holdings, the yearly diminution of grazing lands in every village, and the rising value of *guzashtā* and occupancy rights are all signs of the growing want of land in parts of the district to meet the growth of the population. In the north the land already bears as many as 735 to 890 persons to the square mile, and the fact that Koiris and Kurmīs have been found ready to migrate to the grant of land in Burma owned by Messrs. Mylne & Co. of Bihiā appears to show that the pressure of population on the soil is being felt.

Labourers. At the bottom of the social scale come the labourers who own no land, grow no crops and depend entirely on the wages of labour. They are an improvident class, but on the whole they are

better off than formerly, to judge from the greater number of utensils and ornaments they possess. This improvement of condition may probably be ascribed to the fact that large numbers of labourers migrate year after year at the beginning of the cold season, for temporary employment on roads, tanks and railways in the harvest field, and in other miscellaneous employments' returning again at the end of the hot weather in time for the agricultural operations which commence with the bursting of the monsoon.

Kamiyās.

Side by side with this class of free labourers, there is a small and diminishing section of the community known as *kamiyās*, whose position is that of mere serfs. A *kamiyā* usually sells himself to a master for a lump sum of money down. Formerly this was an actual sale of himself and his heirs for ever, but this practice having been declared illegal, he now hires himself, in consideration of an advance or loan, to serve for 100 years or till the money is repaid. They are not allowed to work for any one but their master, except with his permission, and have their food supplied by him. On the whole their position is in many ways little, if at all, worse than that of the free labourers (*banihārs*); though they are degraded beneath the level of the peasant, they are never in want of food even in lean years; and in this respect they are better off than the ordinary labourer, who is the first to feel the pinch of scarcity when any failure of the crops causes a cessation of the demand for labour.

Effects of famine.

With a people so dependent on the soil, perhaps the best test of prosperity is afforded when their resources are severely strained by famine; and it is noticeable that in the famine of 1896-97 Shāhābād escaped far more lightly than many other districts in Bihār, and that eventually only a small portion of it turned out to be actually distressed. This comparative immunity is due to the fertility of the northern part of the district, to the increased staying power of the peasantry which has resulted from the vast improvement in communications, and to the protection afforded by the Son Canals. One of the most remarkable features of this famine was the manner in which the poorer classes of townsfolk and the genteel poor managed to weather the storm with little outside assistance, and that too in spite of the fact that with their small fixed incomes this class is one of the first to be affected by the rise of prices. The famine also afforded proof of the general resourcefulness of the cultivators and of the fact that a great number of the agricultural population have reserve stocks of grain which enable them to tide over bad times. Though the imports of grain were large, they were insufficient to make up the deficiency

between the outturn of that year and that which the population ordinarily require for their support; there were no deaths from starvation; and it follows that the greater part of the balance must have been in the hands of the people themselves and of the local grain-dealers and zamīndārs.

On the other hand, it became apparent that a small proportion of the people are always on the verge of starvation, as the figures for gratuitous relief mounted rapidly as soon as the local organization was complete; the daily average in receipt of this form of relief was no less than 4·47 per cent. of the population of the distressed area; and all of these were found to be in absolute need of relief.

Early accounts. It is of some interest in this connection to read Buchanan Hamilton's description of the general poverty prevailing in the beginning of last century. Only three families, of which one was that of the Rājā of Bhojpur and another that of his kinsman, the Zamīndār of Jagdīspur, lived in the style becoming gentlemen; the huts of the peasants had seldom any window, very few of them had wooden doors, and in many the entrance was always open, as even a hurdle to shut it was considered too expensive a luxury. The free male domestics were usually allowed from 8 to 16 annas a month besides their food and clothes, though in Arrah their wages often rose to Rs. 2 a month; and it was a regular practice to sell slaves, the price of male slaves being Rs. 15 and of women Rs. 20 each. In the neighbourhood of Dumraon, it was the custom for the neighbours to carry any destitute person who was in danger of dying to another village and leave him there; if he survived, the people on whom he was stolen removed him to another village; and, Buchanan Hamilton goes on to say, the wretch was thus bandied about till he died.

Modern conditions. Conditions have improved wonderfully since that time. It is true that there is still a small section of the people who are practically "*ascripti glebæ*," that the bulk of the agricultural community can command only two meals a day, and that there is a certain percentage of the poorer classes who in ordinary times can only just make ends meet and who are often pinched for food. On the other hand, there has been a considerable increase in the incomes of the land-holding and cultivating classes, and their standard of comfort and expenditure has risen. The wealthier inhabitants live for the most part in the towns in substantial houses of brick or stone; and even in the villages the majority of the clay houses are tiled. The substantial cultivators have a large stock of clothes for themselves and their families, and even the labourers are not so utterly resourceless as they used to be. The great bulk of the

ryots enjoy a fixity of tenure which leaves them a fair share of the produce; the cultivators of small holdings have benefited by the general rise in prices; and the class of landless labourers is comparatively small. The northern part of the district contains a substantial and sturdy yeoman tenantry, known as *guzashtādārs*, who have always been tenacious of their ancient rights and customs, and have succeeded in maintaining them. The canals, railways and roads place every part except the hilly tracts in the south within easy reach of the markets, and canal irrigation renders one-third of the population independent of the seasons. The cultivating class have, moreover, a resource unknown to the ryots in Bengal proper in cultivating opium. Those who undertake to do so receive allowances in cash from the Opium Department proportionate to the area which they undertake to plant, and these advances are made at a time when money is most coveted. By this means large sums find their way into the hands of the people; in the famine of 1896-97 over 9 lakhs was paid to the cultivators; and though, as explained in Chapter V, the area under poppy has shrunk of late years, no less than 7½ lakhs was paid as advances in 1903-04. Besides this emigration is more active than elsewhere; large numbers of the labourers emigrate annually in search of work on the roads, railways and fields in the eastern districts, and many thousands of the adult males are to be found spread over other parts of India in quasi-permanent employ. All these persons make remittances to their homes, while those who migrate for a time bring back with them the balance of their savings; and in this way large sums of money are sent and brought into the district every year, and are expended in the support of the families of the labouring classes. In the famine year 1896-97 nearly 23¾ lakhs was paid by money order in the district, the amount paid per head of the population being greater than in any other district in the Patna Division; the money orders were almost all for sums below Rs. 10, the average being about half that sum; and it may be concluded that a large proportion must have represented remittances sent by emigrants to their homes. Since that time this means of remitting money has grown in popularity; and in each of the years 1903-04 and 1904-05 the amount paid by money order has exceeded 31 lakhs, a fact which may reasonably be taken as an indication of the increased prosperity of the people.

CHAPTER IX.

OCCUPATIONS, MANUFACTURES AND TRADE.

OCCUPATIONS. As in other Bengal districts, a large majority of the people are engaged in agricultural pursuits, no less than 64·8 per cent. of the whole population deriving their livelihood from agriculture. Of these 53 per cent. are actual workers, and these include 12,000 rent-receivers, 462,000 rent-payers and 192,000 labourers. Of the remainder 17·7 per cent. are supported by industries; the professional classes account for 1·9 per cent.; and, as might be expected in a district which contains no manufacturing towns or important trade centres, the commercial class is very small, amounting to only 0·5 per cent. The proportion of persons engaged in industrial occupations is larger than in the other districts of the Patna Division; it is approached only in the adjoining district of Patna (17·1 per cent.), the next largest proportion being found in Gayā (14 per cent.); and it is very much greater than in the trans-Gangetic districts. Native handicrafts have in fact not found the same home in the districts to the north as in those to the south of the Ganges; and it has been suggested that the reason of this is that after the murder of Alamgīr and the fall of Delhi in 1759 A.D., many members of the Muhammadan nobil[ity] attached to the Mughal court retired to the *jāgīrs* that had be[en] given them in the Patna, Gayā and Shāhābād districts, bringin[g] in their train large numbers of artificers and traders who settled down in these three districts; while the districts to the north of the Ganges were still in an unsettled state, sparsely populated and only partially cultivated.

MANUFACTURES. As is only natural in a district where the great majority of the people are engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits and where the urban population is small, the bulk of the industrial community are employed in supplying the simple needs of a rural people. Manufactures in the proper sense of the word are few in number and of little significance. Scarcely any of the industries produce anything for export, and those few which do are on a small scale and in a languishing condition.

Sugar refining. The manufacture of sugar was formerly the principal industry; and as recently as 30 years ago the sub-division of Sasarām alone

contained 58 manufactories. A stimulus to the growth of sugar-cane was indeed given by the introduction of the Bihiā sugar mill, and its substitution for the old stone sugarcane press; but with the development of communications and the growth of trade, the industry has found itself less and less able to compete with the imports of cheap Mauritius sugar. Large quantities of this and other foreign sugar are sold at rates lower than those obtained for local sugar, and the manufacture of the latter has consequently declined considerably of recent years. In 1893-94 the output was 50,000 maunds, the principal manufactories being those at Nāsriganj and its suburb Hariharganj, with an outturn valued at 1½ lakh, while there were also smaller refineries at Dumraon, Dubauli, Mahuar, Chandanpur, Nayā Bazar and Jagdispur. The manufacture is now practically confined to Nāsriganj and Hariharganj, where two factories still struggle on, one worked by a water-mill and the other by a small steam-engine; the larger of the two is reported to turn out about 9,250 maunds of sugar and 11,250 maunds of molasses annually, and the quantity produced by the other is 3,500 and 7,500 maunds, respectively.

Paper. Paper was at one time made in large quantities at Hariharganj, and in 1872-73 there were 21 manufacturers who produced 1,293 reams of 10 different qualities. The industry is now almost extinct; it has been unable to compete with the imported machine-made paper of Serampore, and the paper-makers are betaking themselves to agricultural pursuits. The paper manufactured is called *basaha*, and is exported to Benares and other large towns in the north-west, where it is used by bankers who like it on account of its durability.

Weaving. Weaving was formerly a large and prosperous industry, and Buchanan Hamilton estimated that there were over 7,000 houses of weavers working in cotton with 7,950 looms. As in other parts of the Province, the hand-made article has been driven out of the market by imported piece-goods, and the weavers have forsaken their hereditary calling for more profitable occupations; at the last census only 11,000 cotton weavers were enumerated. The weaving of coarse cotton cloths is, however, still carried on to a certain extent, as some of the people prefer it to imported machine-made stuff on account of its durability and its warmth in the cold season; two fly-shuttle looms working at Kamlahar, which turn out a strong coarse cloth, are reported to hold their own against foreign competition.

Country blankets are woven by the shepherd caste, those made in Bhabuā being of good texture; and carpets both of cotton and wool are manufactured in the Sasarām and Bhabuā sub-divisions.

At Sasarām they command a fair sale, but the industry is languishing owing to the importation of carpets from Mirzāpur.

Pottery. Lacquered pottery is a special industry at Sasarām. It consists of ordinary earthen pots and vases of various shapes painted over with lac. The designs and colouring display considerable taste, and though the industry is not extensive, the small cost of production and the high prices obtained leave a good margin of profit.

Saltpetre. The manufacture of saltpetre, which is under the control of the Northern India Salt Department, is carried on to a nominal extent, as the soil is not saliferous; 5,000 maunds were manufactured in 1903-04.

Other industries. Brass, copper and bell-metal are worked by Thatheris and Kaseris into various ornaments for the arms and feet. Mustard and linseed continue to be pressed in the old-fashioned country mills; but the manufacture of vegetable oils is everywhere suffering from the increasing use of mineral oils, and many of the oil-pressers have taken to other trades, such as grain and spice selling.

Mines. The district is not rich in mineral resources. *Kankar* or nodular limestone is found in almost all parts of the plains, particularly in the beds of rivers and along the banks of the Son; it is used for metalling roads, and is also burnt in order to obtain lime. The sand-stone quarried from the Kaimur hills is extensively used for building purposes, for which it is admirably adapted. It is very durable, and even now the blocks which compose the great structures built by Sher Shāh and his family show little signs of decay, while the inscriptions at Rohtāsgarh are still as clear cut as if they had only recently been chiselled. On the construction of the Son Canals, when a demand for building blocks was created, the Irrigation Department succeeded in obtaining all the material they required from the Dhaudhānr hill on the Sasarām-Tilothu road; and more recently the East Indian Railway Company used large quantities of stone extracted from the hills at Karaundia for the bridges and station buildings on the Mughalsarai-Gayā section, as well as for metalling the line. These quarries are still worked; a tramway connects Dhaudhānr with Dehrī, and a short feeder line links up the Karaundia quarries with the railway. Besides this, small slabs are quarried near Sasarām for domestic purposes, being used for hand-mills and curry-stones. A small quantity of alum used to be manufactured about half a century ago in the area north of Rohtāsgarh to the west of the Son, from slates belonging to the Kaimur group of the Vindhyan series; copperas or iron sulphate is also obtained in the same region.

Limestone is found at the bottom of the precipices which surround the table-land and its ridges, in the deep glens behind

Shergarh, and in the bed of the Karamnāsā; large quantities are extracted and, when burnt, yield a good lime. The lime-burning industry was formerly in the hands of a number of small local men, and at one time some eighty kilns were in existence. Recently, however, large firms, both European and Indian, have begun to work the quarries on a larger and more systematic scale, and most of the original small kilns have ceased to work. In the Bānskati Mahāl Government has offered special facilities for the development of this industry by granting permission to several companies to start limestone quarries at low rates of royalty, and a considerable quantity of lime is now being exported, which competes on equal terms with the products of the Katni quarries. The largest lime factory is that at Banjāri owned by Messrs. Octavius Steel & Co.; other Companies, such as the Rohtās Lime Company and Messrs. Mukherji & Co. of Calcutta, have also started operations; and the industry will in all probability soon assume large proportions. The rate of the royalty paid to Government and to the zamindārs varies from four annas to one rupee four annas per hundred cubic feet of lime extracted.

Factories.

There are only five factories in the district, two being the sugar factories already mentioned, which are very small concerns employing on the average only 70 operatives. At Bihiā the well-known sugarcane mills are manufactured and the factory supplies a great demand, as these improved implements are now in common use throughout Bengal. The Irrigation Department maintains an engineering workshop at Dehrī, employing 85 operatives daily, which turns out all the wood and iron work required for the anicut, locks and canals. The Buxar Central Jail is a great manufacturing concern, where the chief industry carried on is the manufacture of tents; besides this, the prisoners are employed in weaving cloth and in making uniforms and clothing for the Police, Opium and Jail Departments.

TRADE.

Trade routes.

The East Indian Railway constitutes the chief artery of commerce, and the main trade of the district is that which is carried out of it or brought into it by this route. A certain amount of produce passes along the canals, which are now in direct connection with the railway, as both their northern and southern termini are now on the line of rail. There has long been a considerable inter-district trade in grain, oil-seeds and *ghī* carried by pack-bullocks between Shāhābād and the large market town of Garwā in Palāmau, but this is now being diverted to the railway owing to the construction of the Bārun-Daltonganj line. A large amount of produce also finds its way along the various roads and then across the Ganges to the Ballia and Ghāzīpur

districts; great quantities of bamboos are floated down the Son; and there is a heavy river-borne trade along the Ganges. The main stream of the latter river passes along the northern boundary, and a bi-weekly steamer service touches at Buxar and Chausā, connecting those places with the large marts situated on its banks both in Bengal and in the United Provinces. A great part of the merchandise of the riparian tract is borne by this service and also by a large number of country boats plying on the Ganges.

Rail-borne trade.

The returns of rail-borne trade show that the balance of trade rests with Shāhābād, as it exports far more than it receives, 16,26,000 maunds of goods being exported in 1903-04, as compared with 10,50,000 maunds imported. In the same year gram and pulses (6,64,000 maunds) formed by far the greatest article of export, and next in importance came sugar in its various forms. Altogether 15,000 maunds of refined and 1,85,000 maunds of unrefined sugar were sent out of the district, besides 2,31,000 maunds of *gur*, molasses and other crude saccharine produce. More than half of the latter was despatched to the Central Provinces and two-thirds of the unrefined sugar to the United Provinces. After sugar the principal article exported was linseed (3,46,000 maunds), almost the whole of which found its way to Calcutta. Among imports coal (5,67,000 maunds) bulked most largely, and next to that salt (2,12,000 maunds) and European cotton piece-goods (62,000 maunds).

A noticeable feature in the trade of Shāhābād has been the decrease in the imports of rice and in the exports of wheat. In 1872, an average year, 6,41,000 maunds of food-grains were imported by the railway; 20 years afterwards only about half of this amount was imported, as in the two years 1892-93 and 1893-94 only 6,50,000 maunds were brought by rail into the district; and finally the imports of rice had fallen to 1,75,000 maunds in 1902-03 and 1903-04. This result may be ascribed to a large extent to the extension of rice cultivation owing to canal irrigation; and the decrease of the exports of wheat from 5,50,000 maunds in 1892-93 and 1893-94 to 82,000 maunds in the two years ending the next decade appears to be caused by a corresponding contraction of the area under wheat.

Centres of trade.

The internal trade of the district is centred at the bi-weekly *hāts* held in the larger villages. Here the villagers and smaller *mahājans* bring their surplus grain on pack-bullocks and purchase their daily necessities, such as salt, cloth and oil. The grain is despatched thence in carts to the larger centres of trade on the railway, the Ganges or the Son Canals. such as Arrah, Dumraon, Buxar and Chausā on the main line of the East Indian Railway,

Sasarām and Dehrī on the Gayā-Mughalsarai section, and Nāsriganj on the Son.

The most important fair is that held at Barahpur, a village two miles north of Raghunāthpur on the East Indian Railway. It is attended by over 100,000 people and is held twice in the year, once in February and again in April. It lasts 12 days and is essentially a cattle fair, but horse-dealers also attend and a considerable trade is carried on in brass, spices, carpets, cotton, etc. An agricultural exhibition is held in connection with the February fair, at which prizes of the value of Rs. 1,500 are given for exhibits of field and garden produce and live-stock, Government contributing Rs. 500 for prizes for cattle and Rs. 150 for agricultural exhibits. At Bhaluni in the Sasarām sub-division a fair is held annually in October and April in honour of the goddess Devī. It attracts about 10,000 persons, and spices, piece-goods and articles of country manufacture are the principal articles sold. The only other fairs worthy of mention are three held at Buxar, called Khichri, Amāwas and Satawān. These are really bathing restivals, and are usually attended by 2,000 to 4,000 people; the principal articles of merchandise exposed for sale are piece-goods, brass-ware, earthen-ware and other miscellaneous goods. Fairs.

CHAPTER X.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

SHAHABAD is well provided with means of communication by roads, railways, rivers and canals. The Ganges bounds it on the north, the main line of the East Indian Railway runs along its northern boundary for 60 miles, and the Mughalsarai-Gayā line crosses the southern portion. The Arrah canal leaving the Son at Dehrī runs up to Arrah (60 miles), while other large branches diverge to Buxar and elsewhere. Lastly, the Grand Trunk Road traverses it from south-east to north-west, and the whole district is well supplied with District Board and village roads, the mileage of which reaches a total of 1,936 miles. The only tract in which roads are scarce and communication is difficult is the Kaimur plateau, which is approached by steep *ghāts* and contains only rough tracks used by pack-bullocks.

ROADS. The roads of the district are a comparatively recent creation. "Two great roads," wrote Dr. Buchanan Hamilton in the beginning of the last century, "pass through the whole breadth of the district, but neither is of much advantage to commerce. One of them is the military road from Calcutta to Benares, which is kept up by the public. Laden oxen, and even carts, can pass during the rainy season, except immediately after great falls, when many torrents render it impracticable. The other road, along the old bank of the Ganges, is also a military road from Dinapore to Buxar; it is maintained by a tax of 1 per cent. levied on the whole land assessed. This road is very indifferently suited even for military purposes, as it is not practicable in the rainy season, and is not carried through between any two great stations. Wheeled carriages, even on these two roads, are very little employed except by travellers of rank, and that chiefly for their own conveyance, or occasionally that of their baggage. Almost the only means of conveyance procurable for hire in the interior, or even close to the Ganges consists of pack-bullocks. Porters are used to carry the baggage of travellers, and weavers and shoe-makers are generally held bound to perform this service whenever required by their landlords, who in return exempt them from ground-rent for their huts." In as late as 1865 the bad state of communications aggravated

severity of the famine, and in the year 1869 the difficulty of conveying grain into the interior was increased by the small number and badness of the roads. The deplorable state of affairs at that time may be gathered from a report of the District Engineer, who wrote:—"The grain that was to give life to the people had to be distributed throughout the district, and the imperfect condition of the local roads rendered this a task of the utmost difficulty. During the rains, when the importations were greatest, the Sasarām and Arrah road, which is the principal line in the district, but unmetalled, was crowded with traffic; and it was painful to witness long strings of carts, half a hundred in a line, cutting their way through a foot deep of puddles." Ten years later there were only two metalled roads, one of which, the Grand Trunk Road, had been constructed in 1861-62, and the other, a road from Dargauti to Zamānia, was only 6½ miles long. Besides these, there were 16 roads, unmetalled but bridged and raised throughout, with a total length of 431 miles; and altogether there were 957 miles of District Board roads. Since that period the construction of additional roads and the improvement of the existing ones has received close attention; and the famines of 1874-75 and 1896-97 gave a great impetus in this direction. During the first famine 5 roads with an aggregate length of 109 miles were made as relief works; and in the latter famine the distressed were employed on the construction of 11 roads, of which 5 with a total length of 56 miles were completed. In addition to the Grand Trunk Road, which is the only road maintained from Provincial funds, there were at the end of last century (1899-1900) altogether 181 miles of metalled, 253 miles of unmetalled roads, and 882 miles of village roads. The number of roads of all classes has since increased, and in 1904-05 the District Board maintained 189 miles of metalled, 527 miles of unmetalled roads, and 1,197 miles of village roads; the cost per mile of the first two classes of roads being Rs. 408 and Rs. 134, respectively.

Leaving out of account the short lines of feeder roads running to the Ganges and Son rivers and to the railway, the principal metalled roads are:—(1) The Grand Trunk Road, which enters Shāhābād at Dehrī-on-Son, where it crosses the river on a massive stone causeway. After passing through Sasarām, Jahānābād and Bhabuā Road station, it crosses the Karamnāsā by a large masonry bridge. Its total length in this district is 58 miles. (2) The old military road, 64 miles long, running along the northern border of the district from Chausā to Koelwār. (3) The road from Arrah Sasarām, running roughly parallel to the Son, 61 miles in -gth. The two latter roads are connected by a road from

Nāsriganj to Dumraon (40 miles), which crosses the road last mentioned at Bikramganj.

Of the unmetalled roads the most important are:—(1) The Koelwār-Akbarpur road (91 miles) running along the bank of the Son, which connects the extreme south with the north of the district: until the construction of the railway in Palāmau it was the chief route along which traffic from that district passed; (2) the Chausā-Sasarām road (47 miles); and (3) the Bikramganj-Mohaniā road (42 miles), passing through the centre of the district from west to east.

RAILWAYS. Shāhābād is fairly well served by railways. The main line of the East Indian Railway runs through the north of the district, which it enters at Koelwār, where a fine lattice-girder bridge has been built across the Son. This great work was commenced for a single line of rails in 1855, and after many interruptions during the Mutiny, was completed in 1862; the second line was begun in 1868, and finished in 1870. The total length of the bridge from back to back of the abutments is 4,199 feet, divided among 28 spans of 150 feet each. Underneath each line of rail is a sub-way for foot-passengers and beasts of burden. The line as far as Benares was completed in 1862, and in 1869 the large importations of grain it brought into the district saved it from famine.

The south of the district is tapped by the Mughalsarai-Gayā line, opened in 1900, running from Dehrī-on-Son to the Karamnāsā, with a total length in this district of 53 miles. It is carried over the Son by one of the longest bridges in the world, which was constructed in three years at a cost of 35 lakhs; the total length is 10,044 feet, and it comprises 93 spans of 108 feet each.

WATER COMMUNICATIONS. The Ganges is navigable throughout the year; and a steamer service for passengers and goods traffic plies as far as Benares, a steamer running three times a week and touching at Buxar and Chausā. Of the other rivers the Karamnāsā, the Dargautī and the Surā are navigable only during the rainy season. Boats of 50 maunds burden sail up the Karamnāsā to the confluence of the Dargautī; on the latter river boats can sail up-stream for about 50 miles; and on the Surā boats of 100 maunds burden ply up to the foot of the hills, where extensive lime quarries are worked. The Kao or Dhobā is only navigable for a short distance from its junction with the Ganges. Navigation on the Son is intermittent and of little commercial importance; in the dry season the small depth of water prevents boats of more than 20 maunds proceeding up-stream, while the violent floods in the rains equally deter large boats, though boats of 500 or 600 maunds occasionally sail up. The main canals of the Son irrigation system are

navigable, 132 miles of canals being now (1905) open to navigation; and a bi-weekly service of steamers runs from Dehrī to Arrah. The canal-borne traffic used to be considerable, but has suffered greatly from competition with the Mughalsarai-Gayā Railway. This line attracts the traffic that was formerly sent along the canals; and the steamer service which formerly ran along the Buxar canal had to be abandoned in 1901. The river and canal traffic is almost entirely carried on by means of country boats, some having a capacity of as much as 1,000 maunds.

Ferries. The District Board controls 17 ferries, of which the most important are those across the Ganges and Son. Passengers are charged small fees, and the right of collecting these is sold by auction.

POSTAL COMMUNICATION. There are altogether 730 miles of postal communication in the district and 78 post offices. The number of postal articles delivered in 1904-05 was 2,553,382, including letters, post-cards, packets, newspapers and parcels; the value of the money orders issued was Rs. 11,98,000, and the total amount of Savings Bank deposits was Rs. 3,63,394. There are also 11 telegraph offices, from which 16,649 messages were issued in the same year.

CHAPTER XI.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

REVENUE HISTORY. Muhammadan assistant.

DURING the reign of Akbar, Shāhābād was comprised within *sarkār* Rohtās, the area of which was 473,343 *bīghas*; and in 1582 the land revenue demand was fixed at Rs. 10,21,986 by Todar Mal, Akbar's great finance minister. The first increase of this assessment was made 76 years afterwards (1658) by Shujā Khān, who raised the annual revenue to Rs. 12,32,833. The great *sarkār* of Rohtās had by this time been split up into two *sarkārs*, one of which retained the old name and was assessed to Rs. 7,77,295, while the other, comprising the northern portion of the district, was known as Shāhābād Bhojpur and had its revenue fixed at Rs. 4,55,538. In 1750 the demand was again increased by the Sūbahdār, Alī Vardi Khān, to Rs. 13,66,410, of which the two *sarkārs* Rohtās and Shāhābād Bhojpur were each liable for Rs. 5,39,565 and Rs. 8,26,845, respectively. On the acquisition of the *dīwāni* by the East India Company in 1765, an alteration in the assessment was made by Muhammad Raza Khān, and the net rental of the *khālsa* and *jāgīr* lands of *sarkār* Shāhābād (1,869 square miles) was declared to be Rs. 6,09,286, while Rohtās (3,680 square miles) was assessed to Rs. 6,75,781. *Sarkār* Rohtās, however, included several tracts outside the district, such as the *parganas* of Siris and Kutumbā in the Gayā district and Japlā and Belaunjā in Palāmau, while the Chausā *pargana* was attached to *sarkār* Ghāzīpur.

Early English administration.

When the English assumed the *de facto* government of the country, they continued the existing system of administration, and until 1769 a native *naib*, or deputy, *dīwān*, conducted the collection of the revenue under the nominal control of the European Chief at Patna. In 1769 Supervisors were appointed in subordination to the Chief to superintend the native officers employed in collecting the revenue and administering justice, and in the succeeding year a Revenue Council of Control was established at Patna. When, however, the Court of Directors sent out orders in 1771 "to stand forth as Dīwān and by the agency of the Company's servants to take upon themselves the entire care and management of the revenues," the *naib dīwān* at Patna was removed, and it was decided to substitute European for native

agency. The Supervisors were now designated Collectors, and a native officer, styled *dīwān*, was associated with each in the "superintendency of the revenues." In the following year, it was determined to make a five years' settlement of Bihār, and, the zamīndārs having declined to accept a farm of the revenues of their districts, the system of putting them up to public competition was attempted. A body of speculators, called renters, accordingly sprang up, and farmed the revenue till 1777, the zamīndārs themselves receiving an annuity of 10 per cent. (*mālikānā*) on their collections. The experiment proved a failure, as ignorant of the real capabilities of the country and incited by the hopes of profit, these speculators readily agreed for sums which they were utterly unable to pay; and on the expiry of the settlement it was determined to introduce the system of yearly farms. This arrangement only intensified the mischief; the renters had no assurance that they would hold the farm another year or even have time to collect the current demand; they exacted as much as they could extort in the shortest time possible; and knowing that they would be imprisoned for any arrears, they made every endeavour to amass a fortune as soon as they could.

This was the state of affairs in 1781 when the whole of Bihār was settled with Mahārājā Kalyān Singh, who was the *dīwān* of the Company at Patna and had the title of "Roy Royan." He proceeded to appoint Rājā Kheāli Rām to be his *naib* and gave him a sub-lease of Chainpur, Sasarām and other *parganas*; but as neither was in a position to manage such a large extent of country, they were forced to let out the *parganas* to farmers or sub-renters called *āmils*. In this way Shāhābād was divided among three farmers, Chainpur and Sasarām being leased to one Mustafā Kulī Khān, *parganas* Pīru, Nanaur and Danwār being farmed by the zamīndār of Jagdīspur, while Rājā Bikramājīt Singh secured the remainder of the district. This system proved equally unsatisfactory; the revenue officers had to use sepoys to assist them in enforcing payment and in coercing refractory ryots; they collected the rents at the point of the bayonet, and wrangled with the local zamīndārs on the one hand and oppressed the ryots on the other. In 1782 the Revenue Chief reported that when he visited Arrah on the 30th June not a plough was to be seen and many of the villages were deserted owing to the oppression of Rājā Bikramājīt Singh and his relation, the Zamīndār of Jagdīspur; the district was continually falling into arrears; and the *āmils* had to be constantly changed.

Proper supervision was difficult owing to the small number of the Company's officers and the vast territory under their control.

In 1774 the European collectors had been recalled and a Revenue Council appointed at Patna. This, however, was abolished in 1781, and the President of the Council, or Revenue Chief, was appointed Collector under the orders of the Committee of Revenue in Calcutta. His jurisdiction was enormous, as it included Bihār, Shāhābād and Tirhut; but in 1782 Tirhut was formed into a separate Collectorship, in 1784 *sarkār* Rohtās became a separate charge under an officer who was not only Collector but also had control of the criminal administration, and in the same year *parganas* Sandeh and Ballia were detached from Shāhābād and placed under the Superintendent of the Hazuri Mahāls (crown lands). In 1785 the farmer of *sarkārs* Shāhābād and Rohtās, who had engaged for 10 lakhs, fell into arrears for the sum of $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakh and threw up the farm in disgust. In the next year the result was no better; one sub-lessee defaulted for half a lakh; another owed the farmer a lakh; and the zamīndār of Dināra, after looting his *kacheri* and killing his men, set the sepoys who were sent to arrest him at defiance and collected a large force at Chausā. The small force of sepoys at the disposal of the Company's officers were powerless to capture him, and ultimately it required the despatch of a small military expedition to secure his arrest.

Writing in 1786 Mr. Brooke, the Revenue Chief, bitterly complained of the difficulty of his position; he pointed out that, within the five years during which he had held the office, three successive settlements had been made which increased the assessment, but only resulted in a decrease in the collections; and, in these circumstances, he urged that the criminal administration should be made over to him in order to "infuse vigour into the collections." At another time he pointed out that there was no kind of villainy which the *thikādārs* and ryots did not practise when closely pressed for payment of the *kists*, and that such were their tricks that the *āmils* for fear of the *Faujdāri* court dare not take those steps to secure payment which were customary and usually observed in the collections. The *Adālat* and *Faujdāri* being under different persons, the under-farmers might, when owing a considerable balance, contrive to have a suit instituted against them in the *Adālat* for a trifling sum; for this they were confined and so managed to avoid the payment of a larger amount. "Imprisonment," he added, "seems no sort of punishment for a native of these parts. It is not here, as in Bengal, where a peon acting by order can bring a whole *pargana* of ryots before the Collector without the least trouble. In this part of the country it is very different, for they do not scruple to oppose even an

armed force sent by order of Government." These representations had the desired effect; and he became virtually the first Magistrate and Collector of Shāhābād with complete control over the revenue and judicial administration of the district.

The Permanent Settlement.

Finally, the decennial settlement, which was declared to be permanent in 1793, was concluded in 1790, the demand of land revenue being Rs. 10,37,836. By the year 1843 it had risen gradually to Rs. 13,55,282, and 20 years afterwards to Rs. 16,71,883; this increase being due, it is said, to the increased knowledge of the district brought about by the revenue survey of 1844-46. In 1873 it had grown to Rs. 17,53,943, the increase being ascribed partly to the survey and settlement of the Gangetic *diāras*; but since that date the demand has remained practically stationary. In 1904-05 it amounted to Rs. 17,20,906, payable by 10,193 estates, of which 9,503 with a demand of Rs. 14,94,766 were permanently settled, 547 with a demand of Rs. 1,31,303 were temporarily settled, the remainder being held direct by Government. The incidence of revenue is only annas 13-9 per cultivated acre or about 22 per cent. of the estimated rental.

Surveys and settlements.

In 1844 a demarcation survey of the district was carried out, in which the boundaries of villages and estates were defined and a compass and chain survey of them was made. This demarcation was followed by the professional village survey of 1844-46, the object of which was to make a survey of the village boundaries and to prepare a map, on the scale of 4 inches to the mile, showing the geographical and topographical features of the country. In 1863 survey and settlement proceedings were instituted in respect of the Gangetic *diāras* in accordance with the provisions of Act IX of 1848; and 12 years later a cadastral survey of the land irrigable from the Son Canals was undertaken on a scale of 32 inches to the mile, and was brought to a close in 1878. Lastly, a revenue survey under Act V (B.C.) of 1875 of the estates bordering on the Ganges was carried out in 1881-83.

LAND TENURES.

In Shāhābād, as elsewhere in Bengal, a longer or shorter chain of intermediate landholders is generally to be found. At one end of the chain stands the zamīndār or *mālik*, who holds the estate from Government under the Permanent Settlement and pays his land-tax direct to the Government Treasury. At the other end is the actual cultivator, called the *jotdār* or *kāshtkār*. There are a number of intermediate tenures between the *mālik* and the actual cultivator, the majority of which partake of a *zar-i-peshgī* nature, *i.e.*, they have been granted by the zamīndār in consideration of a money advance or mortgage on loan, *e.g.*, the *mukarrarī*, which is

a lease from the *mālik* at a fixed rental, after the payment of an installation fee called *nazarāna*. This lease is either permanent, in which case it is called *istimrārī* or *milan-bad-naslan*, or it is only granted for the life of the lease-holder, in which case it is called *hin hiyātī*. In addition to the *nazarāna* the lease-holder has sometimes to pay an advance (*zar-i-peshgī*) as security for the payment of the rent. *Dar mukarrarī* is an exactly similar lease to the above, granted by the *mukarrarīdār* to a third party. The holder of any of the preceding permanent tenures may either cultivate the land with his own labour, in which case the holding is called *nij-jot*, or with hired labour, in which case it is called *sir*; or he may make over the land to another for a fixed term, which gives rise to a number of subordinate tenures. *Thīkā* or *ijārā* is the common term for a sub-lease for a definite term. The holder of a *thīkā* obtains the estate either from the *mālik* or *mukarrarīdār* and has to pay an advance, *zar-i-peshgī*, on getting possession, and afterwards a fixed rent till the expiration of the term for which the lease has been taken. The *thīkādār* or *ijārādār* takes the place of the proprietor, who can only interfere on the ground that his ultimate rights are being prejudiced, or on the lease-holder failing to pay the fixed rent.

The *guzashtā* tenure.

The only other tenure calling for special mention is that known as the *guzashtā* tenure, which is strictly a ryoti holding at fixed rates. The following account is condensed from a report on the Government estates of Shāhābād by Mr. D. J. Macpherson, C.I.E. This tenure connotes not only a right to hold at a fixed rate in perpetuity, but an hereditary and transferable interest. It is specially characteristic of the Bhojpur *pargana*, most of which belongs to the Dumraon Rāj, and appears to date from a period long prior to the assumption of the revenue administration of these provinces by the East India Company; but how it originally sprung up is a matter of conjecture. The original *guzashtādārs* may have been retainers of the old Rājās of Dumraon, bound to render military service in those troublous times, and receiving in return grants of land on specially favourable terms; or they may themselves have been the original proprietors of the villages subordinated by usurpation or for the purposes of revenue administration to the Rājā of Dumraon. The *guzashtādārs* of the present day are probably representatives of both these classes; but the latter view of their origin appears to derive confirmation fr[illegible] the analogy of the history of the original proprietors [illegible]n adjoining *pargana* of Chausā. That *pargana* formerly [illegible]he to *sarkār* Benares, and from Regulations I and II of [illegible] which a permanent settlement was introduced into that pr[illegible]

it appears that there was at that time a numerous class of village zamīndārs who had been dispossessed and reduced to the condition of cultivating ryots during the administrations of Rājās Balwant Singh and Chait Singh. These "village zamīndārs" were, under conditions laid down in Regulation I of 1795, to be restored as far as possible; but in the Chausā *pargana* most of the settlements made appear to have been thrown up owing to over-assessment, drought and other calamities. These settlements were accordingly to be re-adjusted and made permanent by restoring farmers who had been unduly dispossessed, by admitting the heirs of farmers deceased, or by reinstating "the ancient zamīndārs" both in lands relinquished by farmers and in those which were held "amauny" (*khās*). Permanent settlements do not, however, appear to have been concluded in a large portion of Chausā *pargana*; and when the temporary settlements were being renewed in 1840, the Rājā of Buxar claimed to be treated as proprietor of the whole *pargana* on the ground that his ancestor had been dispossessed by the Rājā of Benares. His claim to settle for the whole *pargana* was rejected by Government, but he was allowed to settle for those *mahāls* in which no title to the *milkīat* was established by any other person, as it appeared that his ancestor had been dispossessed, although he had taken no steps to recover possession under Regulation II of 1795. A few of the estates were accordingly settled with him: the rest were apparently settled with persons who had proved a title to the *milkīat*, in other words, the "village zamīndārs." Here, then, we have evidence of a class of village *māliks*, whose ancient proprietary rights appear to have been subordinated, first to those of the Rājā of Buxar, and then of the Rājā of Benares, prior to the acquisition of the *dīwāni* of Benares by the East India Company in 1775. The history of their rights is complicated in the case of Chausā *pargana* by the failure of the first settlement, which it was intended to make permanent, but it seems probable that something of the same subversion of proprietary rights had occurred in the adjoining *pargana* of Bhojpur, where the Rājā of Dumraon had acquired a commanding position. Considerations of policy may have suggested to the Rājās of Dumraon a different manner of treating these "village zamīndārs" from that adopted by the Rājās of Benares, who did not acquire their zamindāri until the 18th century; and while in both cases the former *māliks* were number d to the condition of cultivating ryots, the Bhojpur men may cultivat tipulated for, or been strong enough to retain, a right to hold *i.e.*, the ed rates. If this view of the origin of the tenures be correct, mone oes not seem difficult to explain why the term "*guzashtā*"

came to be applied to such holdings. This term connotes the idea of something having passed away, or having been relinquished. What passed away, however, would appear not to have been the Rājā's right to enhance, but the independent proprietary right which formerly belonged to the "village zamīndārs."

GOVERNMENT ESTATES.

The Government estates in the district are unusually extensive and include parts of Arrah and Buxar towns and the whole of Nāsriganj. Government possesses proprietary rights in altogether 210 estates, covering an area of 149 square miles, of which 67 have been leased out and 143 with an area of 95 square miles are under direct management. Besides these, there are some six estates in which it has incorporeal rights consisting of the right to collect and dispose of the spontaneous produce of the land and to levy dues on such products when collected by others. The history of these estates is of considerable interest and throws a certain amount of light on the history of the district. The greater number of them were part of the property of Kuar Singh, or of his brother Amar Singh, which was confiscated after the Mutiny; and among these may be mentioned the great Bihiā estate settled for 50 years with Messrs. Burrows, Thomson and Mylne as a reward for their services The right of Government goes back, however, to an earlier date in many cases; Buxar bazar and fort and Rohtās came into its possession by right of conquest or cession after the battle of Buxar in 1764; and other estates were confiscated in 1785 from one Rājā Arimardan Singh, who was made an outlaw for having murdered a Government official. Numerous small estates in Sasarām and Bhabuā, denominated "Inglis" or "Arāzi Line," are lapsed pension grants made to retired native officers and sepoys at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century; and some of the land confiscated on the outlawry of Arimardan Singh was in this way granted piecemeal to soldiers who had taken part in the Rohilla war. Not the least curious history is that of Dudhār Pauni, which was abandoned in the first-half of last century owing to a superstitious belief that it was haunted by evil spirits, and was then bought up by Government when it was sold for arrears of revenue. The annual demand of the estates under direct management is (1903-04) Rs. 94,500 and the staff consists of a manager, 7 *tahsīldārs* and 27 peons.

Bānskati Mahāl.

Among these estates, the Bānskati Mahāl calls for special mention. It is an estate of an exceptional order which is almost unique in a permanently-settled district, as Government does not possess any proprietary rights in the land, but only incorporeal rights to certain spontaneous products, fuel, grass, minerals and

the like. The history of the estate is as follows:—After the battle of Buxar in 1764, some communications passed between Rājā Shāh Mal, the Dīwān of Rohtās fort, and Saif-ud-daula Khān, on the part of the officer commanding the British army, with the result that the Rājā handed over to the Company the whole of Rohtās *pargana*, including the fort: the *pargana* itself is over 500 square miles in extent, and includes the greater part of the Kaimur plateau in the Sasarām sub-division, as well as the land lying below it in the valley of the Son from the borders of Mirzāpur down to Dehrī. After the cession, Rohtās fort and the small plateau on which it stands were retained by the Government, and the remainder of the *pargana* was granted to Rājā Shāh Mal in reward for the services he had rendered to the Company. He or his son and successor, Rai Harbans Rai, imposed a *sair* (duty) on all wood, bamboos and other forest produce taken out of any part of the *pargana*, whether from the plateau or from the jungle villages in the Son valley. About the year 1812 the representatives of Harbans Rai gave back the grant to Government, with the exception of 12 *mauzas* which they retained for themselves; and the land so given up was settled permanently by Government in 116 estates containing 271 *mauzas*. Government still retained the Rohtās plateau as its property, together with the Bānskati Mahāl, or the right which Harbans Rai had exercised of collecting spontaneous products or of levying duties on them when collected by others. Both were, however, farmed out for 9 years from 1813 to 1820, but after that they were under Government management until 1834. They were then again farmed out and held by different lessees until 1885, when they reverted to direct management. Since that time, except for a short interval of about 18 months, they have been managed direct by the officers of Government.

The right to levy the Bānskati dues now extends over about 200 square miles, and 108 villages are subject to them. The *mahāl* was once conterminous with the whole of the Rohtās *pargana*, but various causes have reduced it to its present dimensions, such as mismanagement for many years and the special exemption of different portions. Thus the 12 *mauzas* retained by Shāh Mal's family in 1812 were allowed to be exempt, and in 1847, the Rājā of Sonpura, owner of *mahāl* Khandaul, an estate covering 60 square miles and containing 39 *mauzas* in the Son valley and on the slopes of the plateau beyond Rohtās, succeeded in obtaining an order from the Commissioner declaring that his *mahāl* was not subject to Bānskati dues. Lastly, Kachuar, an estate extending for over 40 square miles on the plateau and

slopes north of the Akbarpur valley, which had been confiscated from Kuar Singh, was also exempted in 1863 from the Bānskati Mahāl in virtue of a revenue-free grant which Government had made of the estate to Mr. Bingham in recognition of the services rendered by him in the Mutiny.

The dues are levied in various ways. Grazing fees are charged for the privilege of pasturage; where the products of the land are required to carry on a trade or where the probable outturn can be estimated as in the case of lime-kilns, a yearly fee is paid by each person carrying on the trade or for each kiln of a separate size; permit fees are levied on persons entering the forest to collect produce; and where the products are collected for exportation, a duty calculated on the amount exported is levied at toll stations. The list of duties is extremely curious. It includes such entries as permit fees for collecting cocoons; special fees for cutting wood paid by comb-makers and carpenters, Kharwārs and inhabitants of the country near the Koel; fees paid by shoe-makers and basket-makers for collecting bark and bamboo shoots; and duties on catechu, *mahuā*, drift-wood, mill-stones, etc. The tariff is extremely primitive, but the dues are of great antiquity and are well understood and acquiesced in.

CHAPTER XII.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

THE administration of the district is in charge of the Collector under the Commissioner of the Patna Division, and for general administrative purposes it is divided into four sub-divisions with head-quarters at Arrah, Buxar, Sasarām and Bhabuā. Subordinate to the Collector at Arrah is a staff consisting generally of 5 Deputy Collectors and of one or two Sub-Deputy Collectors. Besides these there are several officers employed exclusively on special branches of work, *e.g.*, a special Excise Deputy Collector, a Deputy Collector in charge of the revenue division of the Son Canals, and a Sub-Deputy Collector under him. Deputy Collectors have charge of each of the other sub-divisions, and those at Buxar and Sasarām, who are usually Joint Magistrates, are each assisted by a Sub-Deputy Collector. ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES AND STAFF.

From the account of the revenue history of Shāhābād it will be seen that various changes have been made from time to time in the area comprised within the jurisdiction of the Collector. From the map of the district given in "Martin's Eastern India" it seems that in the early part of the 19th century a portion of Ghāzīpur, lying between the Ganges and Gogra, was formerly included in thāna Belauti (Shāhpur), while a strip of land stretching for about 15 miles from Buxar on the north to Manipur on the south-west and extending southwards to near Dināra formed part of Mirzāpur. In these early days of British rule administrative changes were of somewhat frequent occurrence; and Mr. Twining, who was in charge of the district from 1801 to 1804, states that an extensive tract of country comprehending 1,500 towns and villages was annexed to the eastern frontier of Shāhābād which thus extended from the Karamnāsā nearly to the gates of Patna, and included the military station of Dinapore as well as Buxar. The sub-divisional system was not introduced till nearly half a century later, Sasarām being made a separate sub-division about 1846; while the Buxar and Bhabuā sub-divisions were created in 1857 and 1865.

REVENUE. The revenue of the district under the main heads increased from 25 lakhs in 1880-81 (when the income-tax had not been imposed) to Rs. 26,30,000 in 1890-91, and to Rs. 29,00,000 in 1900-01. In 1904-05 it was Rs. 29,93,831, of which the greater portion (Rs. 17,20,906) was derived from land revenue; the other sources of income were cesses (Rs. 4,44,035), stamps (Rs. 3,89,990), excise (Rs. 3,97,495), and income-tax (Rs. 41,405).

Cesses. The road and public works cesses are, as usual, levied at the maximum rate of one anna in the rupee, and the current demand in 1904-05 was Rs. 4,34,920, the greater part of which (Rs. 4,12,247) was payable by 14,686 revenue-paying estates, nearly all the remainder being payable by 564 revenue-free estates; the total collections of both current and arrear demand were Rs. 4,44,035. The number of tenures assessed to cesses was 13,658, and there are thus nearly as many tenures as estates in the district; while the number of recorded shareholders of estates and of tenures was 60,572 and 15,349 respectively. A revaluation of the entire district was undertaken in 1900, and the operations, which included the assessment of rent-free lands and their amalgamation with the valuation of the estates, were completed on the 31st March 1904.

Stamps. The revenue from stamps ranks next in importance as a source of income to that derived from cesses. During the ten years ending in 1904-05 it rose from Rs. 3,10,827 to Rs. 3,89,990, owing to the growing demand for judicial stamps, which brought in Rs. 2,98,007, as compared with Rs. 2,30,070 in 1894-95. The increase in their sale has been steadily progressive and has presumably been caused by the growth of litigation, as the proceeds from the sale of court-fee stamps alone have grown by over half a lakh of rupees. During the preceding ten years the revenue derived from this source stood practically still; the receipts from judicial stamps showed an increase of only Rs. 16,000, and the growth of revenue, such as it was, was almost entirely due to the increased sale of non-judicial stamps, the revenue of which rose from Rs. 58,187 to Rs. 95,300.

Excise. The excise revenue is, as usual, derived from imported liquors, country spirits, *tāri*, opium, and the duty and license fees on hemp drugs. A statement of the various exciseable articles and of the sums realized from them in the decade 1893—1902 is given in the Appendix, from which it will be apparent that the income from this source has been fairly constant, except for the famine year 1897-98, when it declined to Rs. 2,62,797. The manufacture and sale of country spirits are carried on under what is known as the dual system, *i.e.*, there are a central distillery at Arrah and

outstills for the supply of the rest of the district. The receipts from country spirits, which amounted to Rs. 2,45,655 in 1904-05, account for over three-fifths of the total excise revenue (Rs. 3,97,495); the remainder is almost entirely made up of the duty and license fees levied on *gānja*, *i.e.*, the unimpregnated dried flowering tops of the cultivated female hemp plant (*cannabis sativa* or *indica*), and on *bhāng*, *i.e.*, the dried leaves of several varieties of *cannabis* usually gathered wild; the amount thus realized was Rs. 1,39,270 in 1904-05. The consumption of these hemp drugs, particularly of *gānja*, is very great, and far exceeds that in any other district of the Patna Division, the gross receipts aggregating Rs. 711 for every ten thousand of the population as compared with the Divisional average of Rs. 420. The expenditure on spirits and fermented liquors (Rs. 1,393 per 10,000) is nearly double this, but is considerably below that for the Division as a whole. The average consumption of outstill liquor is 44 and of distillery liquor 239 proof gallons per mille, the incidence of taxation per head of the population being annas 1-8 and 10-3 respectively. There are nine shops for the sale of distillery liquor and 100 outstills selling outstill liquor, *i.e.*, one retail shop for the sale of country spirit to every 18,000 persons; and besides these there are 651 shops licensed to sell country fermented liquor (*tāri*), or one shop to every 3,014 persons. As regards the sale of drugs, there are only 19 shops licensed to sell opium by retail, which gives an average of one shop to every 103,300 persons, while the number of shops selling *gānja*, *bhāng* and other hemp drugs (156 or one shop to 12,581 persons) is unusually large for Bihār. Opium is but little used, and the revenue from retail sales is insignificant, as the duty and license fees aggregate only Rs. 5,000.

Income-tax.

From the Appendix it will be observed that in 1901-02 the income-tax yielded altogether Rs. 46,795, paid by 1,738 assessees, of whom 1,170 paying Rs. 13,905 had incomes of Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000. At that time the minimum income assessable was Rs. 500, but this was raised in 1903 to Rs. 1,000 per annum, and the number of assessees consequently fell in 1904-05 to 717 and the net collections to Rs. 41,405. This amount is the least realized from the tax in the whole of the Patna Division, and the number of assessees is smaller than in any district north or south of the Ganges.

Registration.

There are seven offices for the registration of assurances under Act III of 1877, one at Arrah with a joint sub-registry office at Koelwār, and the other five in the interior at Bhabuā, Bikramganj, Buxar, Jagdīspur and Sasarām. At the head-quarters station the Special Sub-Registrar deals, as usual, with

the documents presented there, and assists the District Magistrate, who is *ex-officio* Registrar, in supervising the proceedings of the Rural Sub-Registrars who are in charge of the other registration offices.

The marginal statement shows the number of documents registered and the receipts and expenditure at each office in 1904. The number of registrations has increased but little since 1894, when 14,021 documents were registered, in spite of the fact that the year 1904 being what is called in Bihār a *lagan* year, there were a great number of marriages and that there was a rise of 8 per cent. in compulsory mortgages, in consequence of the people having contracted loans to defray this unusual expense. The most remarkable feature of the returns is the very large number of deeds of sale and usufructuary mortgages of ryoti holdings at fixed rates. In 1904 as many as 1,600 deeds of sale of such holdings were registered, as compared with 2,014 for the rest of the Patna Division, the purchase money being 5½ lakhs; while the number of usufructuary mortgages of holdings of the value of Rs. 100 and over was 2,748, or more than 13 times as great as that recorded (183) for all the other districts in the Division.

NAME.	Documents registered.	Receipts.	Expenditure.
		Rs.	Rs.
Arrah ...	4,045	10,397	4,013
Bhabuā ...	1,145	2,093	930
Bikramganj ...	1,050	1,581	897
Buxar ...	2,452	3,512	1,439
Jagdīspur ...	2,493	3,672	1,411
Koelwār ...	1,186	1,404	910
Sasarām ...	1,824	3,104	1,297
Total ...	14,195	25,763	10,897

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE. Civil Justice.

The judicial staff entertained for the purposes of civil justice consists of the District Judge and a Subordinate Judge stationed at Arrah, and of one Munsif at each of the sub-divisional head-quarters, Arrah, Sasarām and Buxar. The civil work of the Bhabuā sub-division is generally carried on by the Munsif of Sasarām, and occasionally an additional Munsif is employed temporarily whenever his services are required to clear off an accumulation of cases. Statistics of the work performed by the various Civil Courts will be found in the Appendix.

Criminal Justice.

Criminal justice is administered by the District Judge, who is also Sessions Judge, the District Magistrate and the various Deputy and Sub-Deputy Magistrates at the head-quarters and sub-divisional stations. The sanctioned staff at Arrah consists, in addition to the District Magistrate, of four Deputy Magistrates of the first class and one of the second or third class. Besides these officers, a Sub-Deputy Magistrate exercising third class powers is generally

posted to the head-quarters station by the Commissioner of the Division; and the Superintending Engineer, Son Circle, and the Executive Engineer, Arrah Division, have the powers of magistrates of the third class and try cases connected with breaches of Irrigation laws. The Sub-divisional Officers at Buxar, Sasarām and Bhabuā are almost invariably officers vested with first class powers, and each of the first two is assisted by a Sub-Deputy Magistrate of the second class. In the municipalities of Arrah, Bhabuā, Buxar, Dumraon, Jagdīspur and Sasarām there are benches of Honorary Magistrates, of which those at Arrah, Buxar, Jagdīspur and Sasarām are vested with second class powers and the others with third class powers. At Arrah four, at Bhabuā one, and at Sasarām two Honorary Magistrates are authorized to sit singly for the trial of cases and exercise the powers of a magistrate of the second class; at Dumraon one of the Honorary Magistrates is authorized to sit singly for the trial of such cases as may be made over to him and also to take cognizance of cases under section 34, Act V of 1861; while two members of the Sasarām bench and an Honorary Magistrate at Nāsriganj are empowered to sit singly at Dehrī for the trial of cases under the same section. In all, there are 58 Honorary Magistrates, of whom 11 sit singly, and they are reported to render useful assistance to the criminal administration of the district.

Statistics showing the work of the Criminal Courts and the class of offences dealt with will be found in the Appendix: the latter call for no special comment. The district was formerly notorious for the number of dacoits it sheltered and for the boldness of their depredations; and its evil reputation on this account has been perpetuated in the proverb "Do not go to Shāhābād; if you go, do not stay; if you stay, do not sleep." Dacoity is not now so prevalent; and, as in other parts of Bihār, burglary is the commonest offence. The soft mud walls of the houses, the weary sleep of the inmates, the negligence (or often the acquiescence) of the *chaukīdārs* combine with the adroitness of the burglar to render his trade easy and his identification a rare occurrence. Further, the property stolen generally consists of brass utensils, trumpery ornaments, clothing, cash, or grain; and when the same pattern prevails throughout a Province, the identification of the property is as difficult as the concealment of it is easy. Cattle lifting is another common form of crime, practised chiefly by Ahīrs, and this district has long been notorious for its prevalence; it is more frequent than would appear from the statistics of conviction both because of the difficulty of tracing the offenders, who remove the stolen cattle to great distances, and also because it Crime.

is usual for the thieves to restore them for a consideration. Cattle theft is in fact recognized by the people as part of an organized system of levying blackmail; they frequently know to whom to apply, and hence a considerable portion of the cases which actually occur are not reported.

Disputes about land and irrigation are a fruitful source of offences against the public tranquillity; and violent breaches of the peace are common when the crops are on the ground or the reservoirs are full of water. With a large proportion of turbulent Rājputs and truculent Bābhans, the people of the district have always been prone to this form of crime, and in earlier days such disputes led to desperate riots which were more like pitched battles. We learn from Twining's "Travels in India" that in his time the people of Chainpur and Sasarām had a great dispute about an immense embankment which the latter had made across a valley in their territory in order to amass water for their lands. Neither party, he says, being disposed to give way, the men of Chainpur determined to arm, and go in a body and possess themselves of the "bund" and destroy it. The Khān of the city of Sasarām, a powerful and brave chieftain, was nothing loath to lead forth his dependants to oppose this aggression. Eventually 3,000 armed men on either side were assembled and preparing for battle; and a sanguinary conflict was only averted by a compromise effected by the Collector, who mentions that in a conflict which took place under his predecessor, a few years before, between the same parties and for the same object, 400 lives were lost. The people are still as ready to settle their disputes in this primitive fashion; and one hundred years later (1902) there were only eight and in 1904 six other districts in Bengal in which more cases of rioting occurred.

Police. For police purposes, the district of Shāhābād is divided into 11 police circles (thānas), viz., (1) Arrah, (2) Shāhpur, and (3) Pīru in the Sadar sub-division; (4) Buxar and (5) Dumraon in the Buxar sub-division; (6) Bikramganj, (7) Kargahar, (8) Dehrī and (9) Sasarām in the Sasarām sub-division; (10) Bhabuā and (11) Mohaniā in the Bhabuā sub-division. Subordinate to the thānas are 18 outposts, of which a list will be found in the Appendix; and there are therefore 29 centres in all for the investigation of crime. The force engaged in the prevention and detection of crime consisted in 1904 of the District Superintendent of Police, 4 Inspectors (one in each sub-division), 43 Sub-Inspectors, 46 head-constables and 526 constables; and the rural force for the watch and ward of villages in the interior had a strength of 301 *dafādārs* and 4,254 *chaukīdārs*. The cost of

the regular force was nearly Rs. 1,12,000, and there was one policeman to every $10\frac{1}{5}$ square miles and to every 4,596 persons, as compared with the average of $9\frac{4}{5}$ square miles and 5,403 persons for the whole of Bihār. In addition to the rural and regular police, there is a force of town police employed in the municipalities under head-constables drawn from the regular force. The strength of the town police in 1904 is shown in the margin.

	Head constables.	Town chaukīdārs.
Arrah	4	60
Bhabuā	1	10
Buxar	2	20
Dumraon	1	20
Jagdīspur	1	11
Sasarām	1	37

Jails.

Besides the three subsidiary jails at the head-quarters station in each of the three sub-divisions of Buxar, Sasarām and Bhabuā, there is a District jail at Arrah and a Central jail at Buxar. Statistics will be found in the Appendix. The subsidiary jails at Buxar, Sasarām and Bhabuā are merely lock-ups; and in 1904 the daily average of prisoners was only 12, 14 and 8, respectively. At Buxar male prisoners are sent to the Central jail on conviction, and female prisoners to the District jail, as there are no female wards in the Central jail; in the other sub-divisions all but short-term prisoners are sent to the Arrah jail, where on the average 234 prisoners were confined daily in 1904; this jail is a fairly healthy one, and the death-rate was only 19·6 per mille of its average strength. The prisoners are employed on oil pressing, thread twisting, carpet weaving and tent making, the industry last named having been recently introduced as a new branch of work. The Buxar Central jail is one of the largest jails in the Province, and in 1904 the average daily strength was 1,238 prisoners, of whom about half were employed on manufactures. The principal industries are tent making, cloth weaving, and the manufacture of prison clothing and of uniforms for the regular and rural police and the Opium and Jail Departments; the net profits have for several years past averaged more than a lakh annually and were over Rs. 1,12,000 in 1904. The jail has always been exceptionally healthy; in 1904 the death-rate was only 16·9 per mille and the average for the preceding ten years was 20·1 per mille.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

OUTSIDE municipal areas, local affairs are managed by the District Board which has jurisdiction over the whole district, and by the Local Boards which have been constituted for each subdivision. The District Board is responsible for the maintenance of roads, bridges and roadside rest-houses, and has the general superintendence of primary and middle schools. It is also entrusted with the management of pounds and public ferries, the control over dispensaries, the provision of a proper water-supply and village sanitation. To the Local Boards, which work in subordination to it, have been delegated the administration of small sums allotted for the construction and repair of village roads and the discharge of certain functions which will be mentioned later.

DISTRICT BOARD.

The District Board was established in the year 1887 and consists of 25 members. The District Magistrate is an *ex-officio* member of the Board and has been its Chairman since its constitution. There are 5 other *ex-officio* members, 7 members are nominated by Government and 12 are elected. The Appendix shows, for the 10 years 1892-93 to 1901-02, the principal sources from which this body derives its income and the objects on which it is spent. Its average annual income during this period was Rs. 2,28,000, of which Rs. 1,66,000 was derived from Provincial rates; and the average expenditure was Rs. 2,32,000, of which 1½ lakh was spent on civil works, Rs. 20,000 on education, and the same sum on medical relief. In 1904-05 the Board had an opening balance of Rs. 85,500, and its income was Rs. 2,62,500, or annas 2·3 per head of the population; the expenditure in the same year was Rs. 2,96,600. Here, as elsewhere, the Provincial rates form the chief source of income, bringing in over two lakhs of rupees. The incidence of taxation is annas 3-6 per head of the population, a figure higher than in any other district of the Patna Division.

The Board maintains altogether 189 miles of metalled and 527 miles of unmetalled roads, besides 1,197 miles of village tracks, the immediate administration of which is vested in the

District Engineer; that officer is also responsible for the management and repair of 16 inspection houses and 2 dâk bungalows kept up by the Board. It also controls 41 pounds and 17 ferries, which are generally leased out. For the relief of sickness it maintains two dispensaries and aids seven others; and when cholera breaks out in the interior, despatches native doctors with medicines to the affected villages and takes measures to disinfect the worst of them; altogether 4·9 per cent. of its ordinary income is expended on medical relief and sanitation. One of its most important functions is the supervision of education; it employs an inspecting staff of 4 Sub-Inspectors and 11 Inspecting Pandits, and maintains 6 middle schools, and aids as many others, besides 29 upper primary and 436 lower primary schools.

LOCAL BOARDS.

In subordination to the District Board are the Local Boards of Arrah, Buxar, Sasarām and Bhabuā, the jurisdiction of each corresponding with that of the sub-divisional charge of the same name. The system of election which obtains in most of the districts in Bengal has not been introduced, and the members of these Boards are appointed by Government. At Arrah the Batwārā and Settlement Deputy Collector is the Chairman, and in the other three Boards the Sub-divisional Magistrates hold this office. The Local Boards were established at the same time as the District Board and receive annual allotments from its funds. They are entrusted with the maintenance of village roads, the upkeep of a certain number of wells and pounds, the control of certain local dispensaries, and with the care of roadside trees.

MUNICIPALITIES.

There are six municipalities in this district, viz., Arrah, Bhabuā, Buxar, Dumraon, Jagdīspur and Sasarām. The number of rate-payers is 16,421 out of a total population of 118,106, the ratio being 13·9 per cent. as compared with the Divisional average of 17·7 per cent. Taxation takes the form of a tax on the persons residing in municipal areas, according to their circumstances and property, which varies from Re. 1 to Re. 1-9 per cent. of the income of the assessees; besides this, a tax is levied on Government buildings at 7½ per cent. of their annual value, and in Arrah there are a water and latrine rate. The incidence of taxation varies between annas 12-7 in Arrah and 5 annas in Sasarām; the latter town is the most lightly taxed of all the municipalities in the Patna Division, the average for which is annas 12-7. Statistics of the annual income and expenditure of each municipality during the 10 years 1892-93 to 1901-02 will be found in the Appendix.

It is reported that the general want of the municipalities is the improvement of roads, drainage and conservancy arrangements. The towns of Arrah and Sasarām, in particular, suffer from a

congestion of blocks of houses ill-planned and ill-ventilated, which stand in urgent need of improvement. Generally speaking, all the municipalities are badly aligned, the roads are narrow and the system of drainage is defective.

Arrah. The Arrah Municipality was constituted in 1865, and the municipal board consists of 18 members, of whom one is an *ex-officio* member, 12 are elected and 5 are nominated. The area within municipal limits is 6 square miles, and the number of rate-payers is 5,677 or only 12·2 per cent. of the population, one of the lowest percentages in the Patna Division. The average annual income for the decade ending in 1901-02 was Rs. 52,000 and the expenditure Rs. 47,000. In 1904-05 they were Rs. 58,050 and Rs. 53,130, respectively; besides this direct expenditure, Rs. 8,330 was paid in advances and the repayment of loans. The incidence of taxation per head of the population is annas 12-7; it was formerly annas 11-5, and the increase is due to a revision of assessment which has recently (1903) been conducted. The main heads of income are a tax on persons according to their circumstances and property at 1½ per cent. of their income, which yielded Rs. 16,260 in 1904-05, a water-rate (Rs. 10,470), a tax on animals and vehicles (Rs. 4,850) and a latrine rate (Rs. 1,730). The principal items of expenditure are conservancy, medical relief and public works, which accounted respectively for 16·6, 21·5 and 19·4 per cent. of the expenditure.

Arrah is the only municipality in the Patna Division which is provided with a supply of filtered water. When the then Lieutenant-Governor visited the town in 1891, he was struck with its insanitary condition and particularly with the want of a supply of pure drinking water. The town depended at that time for its water-supply on 6 wells, and most of them were condemned by medical authorities as unfit for drinking purposes. Year after year as the rainy season came round, cholera broke out in epidemic form, and in each succeeding year with increased virulence. To remedy this state of affairs, it was decided to supply the town with filtered water from the Son, and nearly 4 lakhs was contributed for the construction of water-works. Of this amount the District Board and Municipality each contributed one lakh, and the late Rājā Rājeswarī Prasād Singh of Surajpura gave a generous donation of 1½ lakh, the balance being raised by local subscriptions. The works were begun in 1893 and were opened a year afterwards. During the year 1904-05 nearly 28,326,000 gallons of filtered water were supplied to the town, giving a daily average of 77,605 gallons, or about 1¾ gallons per head daily.

The water-works are managed by a Joint Committee of the Municipal Commissioners and District Board members, and the municipality contributes Rs. 4,500 annually towards the cost of maintenance. The income received from the water-rate has hitherto been insufficient for their upkeep, and the loss on their working has only been made good by the District Board paying a large contribution (Rs. 4,000) every year. Recently, however, there has been a revision of the assessment, which has resulted in an increase of Rs. 6,450; and in 1903-04 the receipts from the water-rate for the first time exceeded the maintenance charges. Owing to the burden imposed on it by these water-works, Arrah is one of the few municipalities in the Patna Division financially embarrassed. In order to provide for their construction, it borrowed a loan of one lakh from Government, and Rs. 3,173 goes towards repaying the interest and Rs. 2,580 towards the principal. Its resources have also been severely strained of late years by the annual visitation of plague; and though good conservancy and drainage are two very pressing wants, the funds of the municipality are at such a low ebb that it has been unable to provide them.

The Bhabuā Municipality was constituted in 1869; and there Bhabuā.
are 10 members on the municipal board, of whom one is an *ex-officio* member, 6 are elected and 3 are nominated. The area within municipal limits is a little over a square mile. There are in all 1,002 tax-payers, or 17·7 per cent. of the population, who pay a tax assessed according to their circumstances and property at 1 per cent. of their income. In 1904-05 this tax realized Rs. 2,140, the incidence of taxation being annas 7-3 per head of the population in the municipal area. The total income was Rs. 5,360, and no less than Rs. 2,020, or 41·6 per cent. of the direct expenditure, was spent on medical relief, and Rs. 630 on conservancy.

The municipality of Buxar was constituted in 1869; and the Buxar.
municipal board consists of 13 members, of whom 8 are elected and 5 nominated. The area in municipal limits is nearly 2½ square miles, and there are 2,679 tax-payers or 19·2 per cent. of the population. A tax on persons is levied, the assessment being made according to circumstances and property; this tax brought in Rs. 6,530 in 1904-05 out of the total income of Rs. 12,710, and besides this Rs. 850 was derived from a conservancy rate, the incidence of taxation being annas 9-7 per head of the population. Altogether Rs. 4,340 was spent on medical relief and Rs. 3,020 on conservancy.

The municipality of Dumraon was constituted in 1869. There Dumraon.
are 9 municipal commissioners, of whom 6 are elected and 3

nominated. The area within municipal limits is 2 square miles and the number of rate-payers is 2,688, or 15·5 per cent. of the population. A tax is levied on persons, which is assessed, according to their circumstances and property, at Re. 1-9 per cent. of their income and at $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the annual value of Government buildings; in 1904-05 the receipts from this impost were Rs. 6,150 or three-fifths of the total income (Rs. 10,050); and the incidence of taxation on the population was annas 6-7 per head. Nearly 30 per cent. of the direct expenditure (Rs. 8,330) was spent on conservancy and 24·6 per cent. on public works such as roads and buildings.

Jagdīspur. The municipality of Jagdīspur was established in 1869. The municipal board consists of 9 members, of whom 6 are elected and 3 nominated. The area within municipal limits is one square mile, and there are 1,663 rate-payers or 14·5 per cent. of the population. In 1904-05 the total income was Rs. 5,280, of which the tax on persons (or property tax) accounted for Rs. 3,900 and a tax on animals and vehicles for Rs. 1,100, the incidence of taxation being as low as annas 7-1 per head of the population. The principal items of expenditure were roads (Rs. 1,300), conservancy (Rs. 775) and medical relief (Rs. 700).

Sasarām. The municipality of Sasarām was constituted in 1869. The municipal board consists of 22 members, of whom one is a member *ex-officio*, 7 are nominated and 14 are elected. The area within municipal limits is $1\frac{3}{4}$ square miles and the number of rate-payers is 2,712, or 11·4 per cent. of the population, an extremely low proportion for this Division. The tax levied is assessed according to circumstances and property, at Re. 1-8 per cent. of the income of the assessees; in 1904-05 Rs. 6,160 was realized from this tax, and the incidence of taxation of all kinds was only 5 annas per head of the population. The other chief source of income is the revenue from a large municipal market, which in that year amounted to Rs. 4,100. The total income was Rs. 19,260, and altogether Rs. 3,650 was spent on medical relief, Rs. 3,600 on conservancy and Rs. 4,600 on public works, such as roads and buildings.

CHAPTER XIV.

EDUCATION.

EDUCATION is in a backward condition in Shāhābād, as according to the figures of the last census it stands 29th in order of literacy among the districts of Bengal. The sole test of literacy was the ability to read and write, and only 83,595 persons, or 8·6 per cent. of the males and 0·3 per cent. of the females, could satisfy this simple qualification, in spite of the fact that the district contains 43,300 Kāyasths, of whom a large proportion are educated. Nearly half of the total number (39,253) were residents of the head-quarters sub-division; and Bhabuā was the least advanced from an educational point of view, as out of a population of 306,401 persons only 8,185 could read and write. Backward, however, as the district still is, education has made vast strides during the last century, and more particularly during its latter half. Buchanan Hamilton found that though the persons of the Bhojpur family could read and write both Persian and Hindī, half the owners of land could do neither, and of the other half not above one-fifth part could do more than sign their name and guess at the meaning of a revenue account. Ten or twelve Hindu ladies had "acquired the dangerous art of reading and writing letters," and about 20 more could sign their name and understand an account; but, he added, "these acquirements are considered by the grave as improper, and the childless widowhood of two ladies of Tilothu, who not only write a fair hand, but understand the poetical effusions of Tulsī Dās, is attributed to the divine wrath irritated by their presumptuous search after the forbidden fruit of knowledge." Even by the year 1860 there were only 15 schools with 569 pupils; but after 1870 there was a great extension of primary education, many indigenous *pāthsālās* were brought within the scope of the Departmental system, and in 1872-73 there were 5,133 pupils attending 315 schools. By 1883-84 the number of pupils under instruction had risen to 20,883; and though the attendance fell to 16,922 in 1892-93, it had again grown by 1901-02 to 22,962 pupils studying in 914 schools: statistics of the number of institutions and scholars and of the expenditure on education during that and the preceding

9 years will be found in the Appendix. The succeeding two years witnessed a further growth in the number of pupils under instruction; and in 1903-04 altogether 26,218 boys and 445 girls were at school, or 18·6 and 0·28 per cent., respectively, of those of school-going age. The percentage of boys is still very low, as Shāhābād stands only 41st in this respect out of 49 districts in Bengal, while the proportion of female students is insignificant and far below the Provincial average of 2·8 per cent. It is noticeable that, in spite of the fact that secular instruction is not very popular among Muhammadans in Bengal and that as a community they are slower than the Hindus to grasp the advantages of education, they contribute more than their share in this district of the students attending the various schools.

The total expenditure on education in the year 1903-04 was Rs. 1,36,000, of which Rs. 59,000 was derived from fees, Rs. 40,000 from District, Rs. 17,000 from Provincial and Rs. 3,000 from Municipal funds. The number of educational institutions was 1,004, including 23 secondary and 623 primary schools, besides 358 other schools. The increase during the last 10 years has been considerable, and it has been most marked in the case of primary schools, as in 1893-94 the total number of schools was 865 and of those devoted to primary education only 485. There are few schools of a special character calling for notice; three stipendiary Sanskrit *tols* are maintained at Arrah, Buxar and Jagdīspur, which are aided by contributions from the District Board and Municipal funds; Persian, Arabic and the Korân are taught at the Madrasa Hanifia at Arrah, which receives a grant from the Mohsin Fund; and the Sasarām *Khānkāh* defrays the expenses of a Madrasa for Muhammadans, which prepares candidates for the Central Madrasa examination. Two small schools for aborigines have been established at Rehal and Dahār which are attended by a few Dhāngars and Kharwārs; the East Indian Railway maintains a school at Buxar for their coolies; and instruction is given to the children of the workshop employés at a middle vernacular school at Dehrī. Four training schools have been established at Arrah, Buxar, Mohaniā and Sasarām, at which *gurus* are trained in the new system of vernacular education.

CHAPTER XV.

GAZETTEER.

Akbarpur.—A village on the banks of the Son, 30 miles south of Dehrī, situated a short distance from the rocky precipice of Rohtāsgarh; to the north of the village stands Murli hill, a small hill, 200 feet high, consisting of limestone in thin strata. At the foot of the Rohtās plateau, there is a tomb of the kind known as *chardiwarrah*, built between 1636 and 1638 A.D., which consists of a four-walled enclosure containing a raised stone terrace and 3 prayer niches on the western side, with seven stone sarcophāgi on a stone platform. Over the gate is a long Persian inscription recording the fact that the tomb was built for himself and his family by Malik Wisal, the *daroga* of Rohtāsgarh, in the reign of Shāh Jahān, when Ikhlās Khān was its *kilādār* or commandant. It mentions Akbarpur as one of the *parganas* forming the *jāgīr* of the *kilādār*.

During the Mutiny Akbarpur and the neighbourhood were infested by the followers of Kuar Singh, and it was for some time a centre of disturbance. In October 1858 the mutineers of the Rāmgarh battalion, on being defeated at Chatrā in Chotā Nāgpur, took up a position in Akbarpur, where they were joined by some of Kuar Singh's men. Here Captain Rattray attacked them with his Sikhs and sowārs, and drove them with some loss into the jungles towards Rohtās. On this occasion the cavalry of Rattray's battalion, who had been deprived of their carbines on suspicion of being disaffected and were armed only with *talwārs*, fought with such gallantry that their carbines were restored to them in recognition of the loyalty and courage they had displayed.

Akbarpur contains a charitable dispensary, a police outpost attached to the Sasarām thāna, and the office of the *tahsīldār* of the Bānskati Mahāl.

Arrah sub-division.—Head-quarters sub-division of the district, lying between 25° 10′ and 25° 46′ N., and 84° 17′ and 84° 51′ E., and extending over 913 square miles. Its population was 699,956 in 1901 as against 743,582 in 1891, its density being 767 persons to the square mile, as compared with the district average

of 449 persons; in the Arrah thāna the density is as great as 890 inhabitants to the square mile. The northern part of the sub-division consists of the low lands marking the old bed of the Ganges, which are annually inundated during the rains; in the remainder the alluvial soil is of more recent origin. It is estimated that out of the total area 607 square miles are cultivated, of which 212 square miles are irrigated from the Son Canals. It contains 1,245 villages and two towns, Arrah and Jagdīspur.

Arrah town.—The head-quarters of the district, situated in 84° 40′ east longitude and 25° 34′ north latitude, about 14 miles south of the Ganges and 8 miles west of the Son. There is a station here on the main line of the East Indian Railway, 368 miles from Calcutta. Arrah is the head-quarters of the District Magistrate and Collector, of a staff of five Deputy Magistrate-Collectors, and of the District and Sessions Judge, two Subordinate Judges and three Munsifs. The District Superintendent of Police, District Engineer and Civil Surgeon are stationed here; and it is also the head-quarters of the Superintending Engineer of the Son Circle and the Executive Engineer of the Arrah Division. It was constituted a municipality in 1865, and is supplied with filtered water from the Son.

gendary tory.

General Cunningham* has identified Arrah with the place mentioned by Hiuen Tsiang as that at which Asoka set up a stūpa to commemorate the conversion by Buddha of the demons of the desert who feasted on the blood and flesh of men. Even to this day, a legend lingers that this part of the country was the home of a powerful demon named Bakra, whose daily food was a human being supplied either by the village of Bakri or by Chakrapur (or Ekachakra†), as Arrah was then called. During their wanderings, the five Pāndavas came to Chakrapur and were entertained by a Brāhman whose turn it was to supply a victim for the demon. Bhīm Pāndava, on hearing this, declared that as he had eaten the Brāhman's salt, he would go himself to the demon; and setting forth, he fought and killed him at Bakri, and then brought his body to Chakrapur. This myth is found in a more complete form in the Mahābhārata; and General Cunningham considers that it must have been one of the time-honoured legends of antiquity which the Buddhists adopted for the glorification of their great teacher. The village of Bakri still exists in the near neighbourhood of Arrah, and though there are

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* *See* A. S. I., Vol. III, pp. 72—79 (Calcutta, 1873).

† Ekachakra is mentioned in the Mahawanso as one of the capital cities of India

no ancient remains at either place, the Brahmanical legend of Bakrāsur is, in the opinion of General Cunningham, so clearly identical with that of the man-eating demons described by the Chinese pilgrim that he accepts Arrah as the site of the stūpa and lion pillar erected by Asoka. He further considers that the name of Arāmnagar preserved in the modern Jain inscription at Masār was given to the town by the Buddhists when they adopted the Brahmanical legend; Arāmnagar meaning the city of repose or monastery city, as *ārām* (repose) was the special term used by the Buddhists to designate a monastery.

Another account derives the name of the town from Aranya or desert; and an old temple standing between the old and new portions of the town still goes by the name of Aranya Devī. Various other legends, which have been devised to account for the name and which give more or less fanciful derivations of it, will be found in General Cunningham's article on Arrah in Vol. III Reports, A. S. I.

The Emperor Bābar is said to have marched to Arrah after his victory over Mahmūd Lodī and his rebellious Afghān followers. Local tradition still points to a place near the Judge's court as that on which he pitched his camp and celebrated his assumption of sovereignty over Western Bihār; and it is said that the spot, which until recently used to be called Shāhābād in commemoration of this event, was also the site occupied by the residence of the local Sūbahdār who was in charge of *sarkār* Shāhābād under the Mughal Emperors.

The defence of Arrah House.

The most notable event, however, in the history of the town is the defence of Arrah House during the Mutiny of 1857, when Arrah was the scene of a defence and a relief which will bear comparison with any of the achievements called forth by the rebellion. The outbreak of the sepoy regiments at Dinapore on the 25th July 1857 resulted in the flight of most of the mutineers across the Son into Shābābād. Many of them had been recruited in this district; and they found here a leader ready to put himself at their head. This was Kuar Singh of Jagdīspur, a Rājput of much influence, nearly fourscore years of age, who assumed the title of Rājā and drew to his banner the whole fighting population of the district. The following account of the struggle which ensued is taken from Holmes' History of the Indian Mutiny.

The European residents had been duly warned of their danger, but the warning would have availed them little if Tayler, the Commissioner of Patna, had not already sent fifty of Rattray's Sikhs to help them in case of an attack. Even with

this reinforcement, the whole garrison were only* 68 in number; and their fortress was nothing but a small building, originally intended for a billiard-room, belonging to Vicars Boyle, the railway engineer, who, regardless of the jeers of his friends, had fortified and provisioned it to resist the attack which he had all along deemed possible. His dwelling-house (now the Judge's house) was about 40 yards† off; and to deprive the enemy of the cover which it would have afforded, he had demolished its front parapet. The European women and children had already been sent away; and on the evening of the 26th the small band of Europeans and Eurasians, with one native Deputy Collector, went into the billiard-room and bricked themselves up. Boyle, whose foresight had rescued the others from instant destruction, was naturally one of the leading spirits in the crisis; and associated with him was Herwald Wake, the Magistrate, who assumed command of the Sikhs. Next morning the small garrison were standing at their posts behind their improvised defences; and when the mutineers, after releasing the prisoners in the jail and plundering the treasury, advanced to the attack, as to an assured victory, they were hurled back in astonishment and discomfiture by a well-directed fire. From this moment they only ventured to discharge their muskets from behind the cover of the walls and trees that surrounded the house; and anyone who ventured into the open was sure to be struck down by a bullet from the garrison, who aimed securely from behind the sand-bags which they had thrown up on the roof. Baffled in fair fight, the assailants began to try a succession of stratagems for the destruction of their foe. They strove to corrupt the fidelity of the Sikhs by threats, by appeals to their religious feelings, and by offers of a share in the plunder. But the Sikhs, confident in the resources of their commandant, were proof even against this last argument. Then the rebels tried to suffocate the garrison by setting on fire a heap of chillies outside the walls: but a favourable wind arose and blew the stifling smoke away. The same wind carried off the disgusting stench arising from the rotting carcases of the horses belonging to

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* The garrison consisted of 9 Europeans, 6 Eurasians, 3 Indians and 50 Sikh Police. The names of the principal defenders are Messrs. Littledale, Coombe, Wake, Colvin, Halls, Field, Anderson, Boyle, Dacosta, Godfrey, Cock, Tait, Delpeiroux, Hoyle, DeSouza, Sayid Azim-ud-din Hussain, and Jemadar Hukum Singh.

† The distance between the Arrah house and the Judge's house is stated by Holmes to be 70 yards; other accounts make it 60 or 20 yards. From actual measurement, it appears that the distance from the outside wall of the Arrah House to the edge of the verandah of the Judge's house is 44 yards 1 foot, or from wall to wall 50 yards.

the garrison, which the rebels had killed and purposely piled up round the house. Finally, Kuar Singh unearthed two guns, which he had kept hidden ready for emergencies, and prepared to batter down the little fortress. If he had had a good supply of ammunition, he might have forced the garrison to attempt to cut their way out; but he had no round shot at first (though he afterwards procured some 4lb. shot for one of the guns), and was obliged to use the brass castors belonging to the pianos and sofas in Boyle's house as projectiles.

The small defending force was now in a desperate plight; a relieving party of about 400 men, who were sent by water from Dinapore, fell into an ambuscade when they had almost reached Arrah; and as time passed away and no help arrived, provisions and water began to run short. A bold midnight sally resulted in the capture of 4 sheep, and water was obtained by digging a well inside the house. A mine of the enemy was met by countermining. On the 2nd August, the besieged party observed an unusual excitement in the neighbourhood. The fire of the enemy had slackened and but few of them were visible. The sound of a distant cannonade was heard. Before sunset the siege was at an end, and on the following morning the gallant garrison welcomed their deliverers—Major Vincent Eyre with 150 men of the 5th Fusiliers, a few mounted volunteers, and 3 guns with 34 artillerymen.

The blockade had lasted 8 days, during which the little band of Europeans and Sikhs had held out against 2,000 sepoys from Dinapore and a multitude of armed insurgents about four times as numerous. They were reduced to the last straits, and to quote Vincent Eyre's account:—"The relief of the garrison proved to have been most opportune, for their position had been so effectually mined that a few hours' delay must have ensured their destruction. The position which they had so miraculously defended against the three mutineer regiments, aided by Kuar Singh's levies, was a small upper-roomed house of substantial masonry belonging to Mr. Boyle, by whose skill it had been fortified and provisioned in anticipation of some such crisis. But the strongest position is of little avail where stout hearts and an efficient leader are wanting to defend it, and, in the present case, such hearts and such a leader were forthcoming. To Mr. Wake, as Civil Magistrate of Arrah, who possesses in a rare degree some of the highest qualities of a soldier, no less than to the unflinching fortitude with which his able efforts were supported by his brave associates, may be attributed the salvation of the garrison. During eight days and nights they were incessantly harassed, and

so closely watched that not a loophole could be approached with safety. At one period their water failed, and they owed their supply to the prompt energy of the Sikhs, who, in one night, contrived with most inefficient tools to dig a well on the ground floor, twenty feet deep, whereby abundance of good water was obtained. During the last three or four days their position had been rendered doubly perilous by the fire of some guns of small calibre, which the enemy had mounted within fifty yards of the house, the walls of which were perforated by their balls in all directions. The defence of Arrah may be considered one of the most remarkable feats in Indian history."

Although martial law had been proclaimed in this district, Eyre left the execution of justice in the hands of the civil authorities, except in the case of certain native officials, who had transferred their services to Kuar Singh, and had been taken prisoners in arms against the State. These men were tried by a drum-head court martial, composed of the Judge, the Magistrate and two captains, Eyre himself presiding over the court; and being found guilty, they were hanged as an example. The inhabitants of the city and its environs were ordered to deliver up their arms in camp within 48 hours, and long before that time had elapsed, a pile of 7,000 miscellaneous arms had been collected and broken up.

Copies of three reports submitted by Herwald Wake regarding the loyalty of Kuar Singh, the defence of Arrah and the measures taken after its relief will be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

Buildings. As the head-quarters of the district, Arrah contains all the offices usual to such towns, as well as the offices of the Superintending Engineer, Son Canals, and of the Executive Engineer, Arrah Division; the distillery is situated at Sātpahāri on the outskirt of the town. It contains few buildings of any great archæological or historical interest. The Jama Masjid, a Saracenic building with 4 minarets and a quadrangle 96 feet by 31 feet, is said to have been erected in the time of Aurangzeb. There is another mosque attached to the Maulā Bāgh Endowment, which was built in 1814 A.D. under the auspices of John Dean, a member of the East India Company's service. The structure is of the mixed Saracenic style with 3 domes and 8 minarets; and it is maintained by an endowment fund under the Sajjāda-nashīn of Sasarām (q. v.). The Jains have several shrines in the town, and their chief temple is endowed and governed by the Jain *panchāyat*; three miles from Arrah at Dhanupra on the Arrah-Koelwār road is another Jain temple, built in 1815, at which the

troops halted during their march to relieve Arrah in 1857. A colossal statue of Vishnu, 9½ feet high, which is popularly called the image of Bānasura, but appears to be of the Gupta period, stands in the garden of the Mahārānī of Dumraon; this was brought here in 1882 from Masār, where Buchanan Hamilton saw it in the beginning of last century. The Church contains memorial tablets of officers who died during the Mutiny, and east of the Treasury on the Ramna road is a monument erected in memory of the men of the 35th Regiment who fell on the 23rd April 1858 in the disastrous attack on Jagdīspur.

Baidyanāth.—A village, 6 miles south of Rāmgarh in the north-east of the Bhabuā sub-division, containing a modern Saivite temple built on a large mound, which was excavated in 1882 and found to cover the remains of an ancient temple. The ungainly little temple has been constructed from the materials of this old shrine, and is a medley of sculptures in every imaginable position, used haphazard in lieu of bricks or stones. On the mound, which, like the temple over it, is literally built up of sculptures, an inscription of Rājā Madan Pāl Deva of the Pāl dynasty has been found; close by are several sculptured obelisks and pillars; and round the village there are a large number of buildings dating back to early and mediæval Brahmanism. Baidyanāth is believed to have been a centre of the kingdom of the Savars, and has been described* as perhaps one of the most interesting sites in India—not so much for its present architectural remains, but on account of its historical associations, as it is surrounded on all sides by numerous structural relics illustrating the earliest Brahmanical architecture of which we have knowledge.

Bhabuā sub-division.—The south-western sub-division of the district, lying between 24° 32′ and 25° 25′ N., and 83° 19′ and 83° 54′ E., and extending over 1,301 square miles. Its population was 306,401 in 1901 against 344,902 in 1891, its density being 236 persons to the square mile. The Kaimur hills in the south afford little space for cultivation, and the Bhabuā thāna with 181 persons to the square mile has the scantiest population of any tract in South Bihār. It is estimated that out of the total area, 505 square miles are cultivated; only 20 square miles are irrigated from the Son Canals. The whole of the sub-division is very unhealthy, and it also suffered severely in the famine of 1896-97. It contains one town Bhabuā, its head-quarters, and 1,427 villages. An old Hindu temple stands on Mundeswarī hill, and Chainpur also contains antiquities of some interest.

* A. S. I., Vol. XIX, pp. 27—48 (Calcutta, 1885).

Bhabuā town.—Head-quarters town of the sub-division of the same name, situated in 25° 3′ N., and 83° 37′ E. Population (1901) 5,660. It is connected by road with Bhabuā Road station on the Mughalsarai-Gayā section of the East Indian Railway. Bhabuā was constituted a municipality in 1869, and the area within municipal limits is a little over one square mile. The town contains the usual public buildings ; the sub-*jail* has accommodation for 14 prisoners.

Bhojpur.—A *pargana* lying in the north-west of the district in the Buxar sub-division, which derives its name from Rājā Bhoj of Ujjain in Mālwā, who invaded the district with a band of Rājput followers and subdued the aboriginal tribe of Cheros which then held the country under its own chieftains. The Rājās of Bhojpur long held the position of semi-independent rulers ; and the *pargana* gave its name to one of the two revenue *sarkārs*, Rohtās and Shāhābād-Bhojpur, into which the district was divided under the Mughal Emperors. The Muhammadan chronicles indiscriminately refer to the district as Shāhābād and Bhojpur, and the author of the Sair-ul-Mutākharin states that in his time the zamīndārs of the *sarkār* or province of Shāhābād all went by the name of Bhojpuris. Politically Bhojpur belongs to the United Provinces rather than to Bihār ; it was from this neighbourhood that the Bundelkhand heroes, Alhrā and Udan, traced their origin ; and all its associations and traditions point to the west and not to the east.

The locality has given its name to a language, Bhojpuri, which has spread far beyond its limits and is spoken by some 20,000,000 people. On the north it reaches across the Ganges, and even beyond the Nepāl frontier, up to the lower ranges of the Himālayas from Champāran to Basti. On the south, it has crossed the Son and covers the great plateau of Chotā Nāgpur, where it ultimately finds itself in contact with the Bengali of Mānbhūm and the Oriyā of Singhbhūm.

Bihiā.—A village in the head-quarters sub-division, situated on the East Indian Railway, 382 miles from Calcutta. Population (1901) 764. Bihiā is an important trade centre, but is best known for the iron roller sugar mills worked by bullock power which were invented in 1874 by Messrs. Thomson and Mylne, grantees of the large confiscated estate at Bihiā which formerly belonged to Kuar Singh (v. Jagdīspur). Some years elapsed before their great superiority over the rude machines then in use was recognized, and the inventors had to contend against wholesale piracy, but the popularity of the Bihiā mills is now firmly established. The use of these machines as well as of countless native-made

imitations has become general throughout Bengal; and their introduction has given a powerful stimulus to the production of sugarcane and has led to a great extension of the area under that crop both in this and other districts. Bihiā was formerly the home of a branch of Harihobans Rājputs. According to their own traditions, they were originally settled at Ratanpur in the Central Provinces, but in 850 A.D. they migrated northwards to Mānjha on the Gogra in the Sāran district, where they waged successful war with the aboriginal Cheros. About 200 years afterwards, they left Mānjha and settled south of the Ganges at Bihiā, and after a struggle lasting several hundred years subdued the Cheros who then held the country. In or about the year 1528 A.D., the Rājā, Bhoput Deo, violated Mahinī, a Brāhman woman, who thereupon burnt herself to death and in dying imprecated the most fearful curses on the Harihobans Rājputs. After this tragedy the clan left Bihiā and moved across the Ganges to Ballia. The tomb of Mahinī lies under a *pīpal* tree close to the railway at Bihiā and is visited by large numbers of women who come either to invoke her as a deified being or to offer oblations in commemoration of her. It is said that nothing will induce members of the Harihobans sept to enter Bihiā, though it was once the chief seat of their clan and the remains of their ancestors' fort may still be seen there.

Buxar sub-division.—North-western sub-division of the district, lying between 25° 16′ and 25° 43′ N., and 83° 46′ and 84° 22′ E., and extending over 669 square miles. Its population was 416,704 in 1901 as against 438,739 in 1891, its density being 623 persons to the square mile. It contains 937 villages and 2 towns, Buxar, its head-quarters, and Dumraon. Out of the total area, 408 square miles are under cultivation, 167 square miles being irrigated by the Son Canals.

Buxar town.—Head-quarters town of the sub-division of the same name, situated on the north bank of the Ganges in 25° 34′ N., and 83° 58′ E. Population (1901) 13,945. It is a station on the East Indian Railway, 411 miles from Calcutta, and is a considerable centre of trade.

Legendary history.

Buxar is said to have been the home of many of the authors of the Vedic hymns and to have been called originally *Vedāgarbha*, *i.e.*, the womb or origin of the Vedas. Another account, preserved by local tradition, derives the name from a tank near the temple of Gaurīsankar which was originally called *aghsar* or effacer of sin, but in course of time came to be called *baghsar*. The story runs that a *rishi* or sage, called Bedsira, having transformed himself into a tiger to frighten the *rishi* Durvāsa of whom he

was jealous, was doomed by the latter to retain that form for ever. He was restored to his original shape by bathing in the holy tank of *aghsar* and then worshipping Gaurīsankar, and in commemoration of this event the spot was called *Vyaghrasar* or *Baghsar, i.e.*, the tiger tank. Buxar is an old Brahmanical site and various parts of it have ancient names such as Rameswar, Viswāmitra-kā-āsrama and Parasu Rāma; but it has few remains of archæological interest. The most notable temple in the town is that of Rameswar Nāth Mahādeo, to which pilgrims resort from distant places.

The battle of Buxar.

Buxar is famous as the scene of the defeat in 1764 of Shujā-ud-daula, Nawāb Vizier of Oudh, and Mīr Kāsim, the last independent Nawāb of Bengal, in the battle which finally won the Lower Provinces of Bengal for the British. After their repulse at Patna the allied forces fell back on Buxar where they strongly entrenched themselves; and while the Nawāb-Vizier was indulging in luxury in his camp, Sir Hector Munro rapidly advanced against him. By a skilful manœuvre, he crossed his force over the Son on the 11th of October, and after a sharp skirmish of cavalry on the 13th, the main body of the enemy were encountered on the 23rd, on the plains of Buxar. Shujā-ud-daula placed his troops in front of the fort, having the Ganges on his left. From this position he moved unexpectedly towards the British line, posted towards the east, and having the Ganges on its right. The battle began at eight in the morning and lasted till midday, when Shujā-ud-daula retreated towards and crossed a small nullah about 2 miles to the west of Buxar. The native army had suffered very severely both during the engagement and the retreat; but its principal loss is said to have been at this spot, owing to a temporary bridge breaking down before all the troops had passed. Great numbers of men, whose retreat was thus cut off, perished by the sword of their pursuers, but more in the water and mud of the nullah. According to the Sair-ul-Mutākharin, five or six thousand men were slain in the action, but ten thousand more stuck in the mire or perished in the retreat; and two years afterwards the town of Buxar, the fields and the muddy banks of the nullah, for miles together, were littered with bones.

In this action we had 857 Europeans, 5,297 sepoys and 918 Mughal horse engaged, making a total force of 7,072; of this force only 71 were artillerymen, although the number of guns on the field was twenty-eight. The combined force of the enemy ten times outnumbered that of the English, amongst them being the disciplined battalions of Somru and Madoc, with field-pieces

worked by Europeans, the powerful batteries of the Nawāb Vizier's artillery and the splendid Durāni horse. Our loss was 101 Europeans and 847 natives, killed and wounded; and when we compare this loss with that in the action at Plassey, where we had 1,100 European infantry and artillery in the field, and had only seven killed and thirteen wounded, it will at once be evident which was the harder and more important action. For the battle of Plassey, though it did much, left much to be done. That battle, though fatal to Sirāj-ud-daula and decisive of the fate of Bengal, was, perhaps, more calculated to excite alarm and resistance among the native States than to produce their discouragement and submission. Treachery was known to have had a considerable share in the decision of that action; the small number of British troops engaged in it had not been materially increased since; and victory here was scarcely less important to the British than at Plassey, for defeat, at so great a distance from Calcutta, would probably have been fatal both to the army and to our power in India.

The fort of Buxar, standing as it does on a high bluff above the Ganges and effectually commanding the reaches of that river, was long a position of considerable strategic importance. After this victory it passed into the hands of the British, and the land round it which now forms the fort bazar estate was acquired for military purposes in 1770. Both remained under the Commandant of the fort until 1804, when the bazar estate was handed over to the civil authorities; but the fort land remained under the military authorities as a cantonment until 1842, when it was handed over to the Stud Department. In 1873 the Stud Department was directed to give up farming and purchase grain and forage in the open market, and by 1875 all the land held by it had been handed over to the civil authorities; since that year it has been managed as a Government estate. A large body of soldiers was stationed at Buxar for a long time; and at the time of Bishop Heber's visit (1824) the garrison amounted to 600 men, of whom no less than 150 were Europeans. He described the fort as consisting of a small square with a high rampart cased with turf, four circular bastions, a deep and wide ditch, a good glacis and a sort of lower fort extending to and commanding the river. It is now used as the residence of the Executive Engineer, Son Canals, Buxar Division. The fort.

Chainpur.—At Chainpur, a village 7 miles west of Bhabuā in the Bhabuā sub-division, stands the great mausoleum of Bakhtiyār Khān, a noble monument of Sher Shāh's time. Local tradition asserts that his son married a daughter of Sher Shāh, but

there is no record of what part Bakhtiyār Khān played in the history of the Sūri kings; he must clearly have been a personage of rank, and Chainpur was probably his *jāgīr*. There can be no question, however, that the tomb belongs to the Sūri time, as it is the exact counterpart of the tomb of Hasan Khān Sūr at Sasarām, but of larger dimensions and with a small cupola instead of a pinnacle on its dome. Government has recently undertaken the conservation of the structure and has executed the repairs necessary to preserve it from decay. Similar tombs of a smaller size are found in the neighbourhood, but call for no special notice. The Jama Masjid (1668-69 A.D.) is a building of no special interest, but is regarded with great veneration by the Muhammadans of the place. The fort at Chainpur is surrounded by a moat and defended by a stone rampart flanked with bastions; from the style of the principal gate, which is the only portion now intact, it is evident that it is a building of the time of Sher Shāh or Akbar. Inside the ramparts there is a small Hindu shrine, where a piece of stone is worshipped under the title of Harshu Brahm. In his Introduction to the Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India, Mr. Crooke says that Harshu Pānre of Harshu Bābā was a Kanaujiya Brāhman, the family priest of Raja Salivāhana of Chainpur. The Raja had two queens, one of whom was jealous of the priest's influence. About this time (1427 A.D.), the priest built a fine house close to the palace, and one night the Rājā and Rānī saw a light from its upper storey gleaming aloft in the sky. The Rānī hinted to the Rājā that the priest had designs of ousting the monarch from his kingdom, so the Rājā had his house demolished and resumed the lands which had been conferred on him. The enraged Brāhman did *dharnā*, in other words, fasted till he died at the palace gate. When they took his body for cremation to Benāres, they found Harshu standing in his wooden sandals on the steps of the burning *ghāt*. He informed them that he had become a Brahm or Brāhman ghost. The Rājā's family was destroyed except one daughter who had been kind to the Brāhman in his misfortunes, and through her the family continues to this day. Harshu is now worshipped with the fire sacrifice and offerings of Brahmanical cords and sweetmeats. If any one obtains his desire through his intercession, he offers a golden Brahmanical cord and a silken waist-string, and feeds Brāhmans in his name. It is said that this worship is spreading rapidly over Northern India and promises to become widely diffused [*see* Report, A. S. I., for 1902-03].

Chausā.—Village in the Buxar sub-division, situated on the East Indian Railway close to the east bank of the Karamnāsā

river, 4 miles west of Buxar town in 25° 31′ N., and 83° 54′ E. Population (1901) 1,108. Chausā is famous in Indian history as the scene of the defeat of Humāyūn by Sher Shāh in June 1539. On learning that Humāyūn was leading his army back from Gaur, Sher Shāh collected his Afghān troops, and having thrown up entrenchments on the banks of the Karamnāsā river, opposed the further progress of the Emperor. For nearly three months, the Mughal army remained in this situation, in a state of inactivity, neither daring to storm the Afghān entrenchments nor possessing the means of crossing the Ganges. Thus cut off from Delhi, the Emperor readily accepted the overtures of peace made by Sher Shāh. A treaty was drawn out, by which Humāyūn resigned to Sher Shāh the sovereignty of Bihār and Bengal, on condition that he would no longer oppose his march nor assist his enemies. This treaty having been duly ratified, much rejoicing took place in both camps, but especially among the Mughals, who exhausted by continual alarms, and exposed to constant rain and excessive fatigue, were anxious to return to their homes. But the very night on which the treacherous Afghān had sworn by the Korān not to injure the Mughals, he suddenly attacked their camp, and took them completely by surprise. Resistance was hopeless, and the whole army fled in confusion. Humāyūn himself escaped by swimming across the Ganges on an inflated *massak* or water-bag, which a friendly water-carrier provided; but 8,000 of his soldiers perished in attempting to follow him. The water-carrier, it is said, was afterwards rewarded for his loyalty by being permitted to sit for half a day on the Emperor's throne with absolute power.

Daraulī.—A village 5 miles north-east from the village of Rāmgarh, in the north-eastern corner of the Bhabuā sub-division, containing some remains popularly assigned to the Savars, the principal of which are two old temples with carved stone obelisks and a large tank, a little more than three-quarters of a mile long. From the character of the remains, Dr. Buchanan Hamilton concluded that the Cheros had a temple here, which the Savars destroyed, and that the obelisks found were probably erected to commemorate its destruction. Later investigation has shown that the temples and sculptures are clearly Brahmanical in style and conception [*see* Vol. XIX Reports, A. S. I., 1885].

Dehrī.—Village in the Sasarām sub-division, situated on the west bank of the Son, in 24° 55′ N. and 84° 11′ E. Population (1901) 4,296. It has a station on the Mughalsarai-Gayā section of the East Indian Railway and is a trade centre of some local importance. The Grand Trunk Road here crosses the broad

sandy bed of the Son on a stone causeway 2½ miles long; and just below this the river is spanned by a vast railway bridge. It is made of iron girders laid on stone-built pillars and comprises 93 spans of 100 feet each, its total length over abutments being 10,052 feet. This bridge is not only the longest in India, but next to the Tay Bridge (10,527 feet) is believed to be the longest in the world. It was opened in February 1900, exactly 3 years from the date on which the work was commenced. The chief importance of Dehrī is due to the fact that it is the site of the head-works of the Son Canals, where the Main Western canal branches off from the anicut thrown across the main channel of the river. Dehrī also contains workshops designed to construct and maintain the various works in stone, wood and iron which are scattered over the canal system. They are substantial stone buildings with iron roofs, and embrace a foundry, saw-mill, blacksmith's shop, fitting shop and a boat-yard. At Admapur, 3 miles to the west, is a small cemetery on the side of the Grand Trank Road containing the graves of a number of men of the 77th Regiment who died here in 1859.

Deo Barunārak.—A village in the head-quarters sub-division, 6 miles north-east of Mahādeopur and 27 miles south-west of Arrah, containing two temples of considerable age. In front of the larger one stand 4 pillars of the Gupta style, on one of which is an inscription of Jivita Gupta (740 A.D.) of the later Gupta dynasty, which records the dedication of the temple to Barunārak. The shrine, although originally dedicated to the sun, now contains an image of Vishnu flanked by two small statues of the sun-god. The second temple also has an old pedestal of a statue of Sūrya, and evidently belongs to the same time; both are built of brick with very little ornamentation and are in fair preservation, though the spires are broken. Another interesting pillar of the Gupta period stands close to the temples. Its capital is square, and has on its four sides figures of Indra, Yama, Baruna and Kubera, the presiding deities of the east, south, west and north. Around the circular shaft are eight rather indistinct figures, which are evidently representations of the planets, as Rāhu can be recognized among them [*see* Report, A. S. B. C., for 1903-04].

Deo Mārkandeya.—At Deo Mārkandeya, a village in the Sasarām sub-division, 5 miles north of Nāsriganj, 37 miles to the south of Arrah and a few miles west of the Son near the Sasarām-Arrah road, there are 3 temples and 3 isolated lingas standing on a large mound covered with bricks. The principal one enshrines statues of Vishnu and Sūrya, of very crude fabric

and probably of a late period. The second temple merely has an image of Sūrya, and the third, which is still a place of religious worship, has a linga with 4 heads (*Chaumukhī Mahādeo*). The inhabitants quote a Sanskrit verse which says that the main temple was built in Bikrama Sambat 120 (A.D. 63) by Gobhāvini, the queen of Rājā Phulchand Chero; and General Cunningham assigns the temples to the rule of the Cheros over Shāhābād in the 6th or 7th century. Later investigat ion shows, however, that they are not very old and are of little interest [*see* Reports, A. S. I., Vol. XIX, 1885, and Report, A. S. B. C., for 1903-04].

Dumraon.—Town and municipality in the Buxar sub-division, situated on the East Indian Railway, 400 miles from Calcutta, in 25° 33′ N., and 84° 9′ E. Population (1901) 17,236. The town, which contains a charitable dispensary, veterinary dispensary and High English school, is best known in connection with the Dumraon Rāj, to which family it has given its name. The principal buildings are the palace and pavilion of the Rāj, and a garden house which is set apart for the reception and accommodation of officers visiting Dumraon; the former are both excellent examples of modern Hindu architecture. The former residence of the family is said to have been destroyed by Mīr Kāsim Alī. Within the palace grounds stands a temple dedicated to Srī Bihārījī, where great religious festivals are celebrated on the birthdays of Rām and Krishna, to which *pandits* are invited from all parts of India. The Rāj maintains an agricultural farm, where experimental farming is carried on and agricultural students receive training, and also an economic museum containing selected specimens of grain grown in India, of agricultural implements and tools, and of numerous economic products, such as fibres, dyes and spices.

Dumraon Rāj.—An estate covering an area of about 485,000 acres, owned by an old Rājput family, the head-quarters of which have been successively Karūr in *pargana* Danwār, Dawa in *pargana* Bihiā, Bihtā, Jagdīspur, Bhojpur, Buxar, Mathila and Dumraon. They trace their pedigree back to Rājā Bikramājīt, from whom the Sambat era of the Hindus is reckoned; and 69 of their ancestors were rulers of Ujjain in Mālwā. The founder of the family in this district was one Santana Shāhi, who is said to have settled in the village of Karūr when returning from Gayā where he had gone to offer *pindas* in 1320 A.D. During the war between Sher Shāh and Humāyūn (1534—1540), Gajpati, or Gajan, Shāhi and Dalpat Shāhi, two rival princes of the family, joined opposing sides, and each succeeded in obtaining rewards for their services;

Gajan Shāhi receiving extensive *jāgīrs* and the title of Rājā from Sher Shāh, while Dalpat Shāhi was made a *mansabdār*, or commander of horse when Humāyūn re-established his supremacy. During the reign of Akbar, Gajpati and his brother Bairi Sal defied the Mughal armies for several years; the rising of Dalpat Shāhi ended in his defeat and imprisonment, but having obtained his liberty on the payment of a large ransom, he continued in rebellion under Jahāngīr until his capital was sacked by the Mughals. Rājā Nārāyan Mal, who succeeded in 1607, was the sole proprietor of Bhojpur and Jagdīspur till 1621, was granted the title of "Rājā Mal Mansabdār" and was allowed to keep a body of 7,000 troops. On his death the estate passed to his brother, Rājā Rudra Pratāb Nārāyan Singh, who removed the seat of the family to Nayā Bhojpur, where some remains of his palace still exist. This village remained the head-quarters of the house till 1745, when Rājā Horil Singh removed his residence to Dumraon; while his nephews, Bābu Buddha Singh and Bābu Udwant Singh, settled in Jagdīspur and Buxar, respectively, and there founded two rival families. Horil Singh was succeeded in 1746 by Rājā Chhattardhāri Singh, and the next great chief of the Dumraon family was Rājā Bikramājīt Singh, who played an important part in the troubled times which marked the rise of British power and followed their occupation of the district. He joined the British before the battle of Buxar and raised a body of troops to help them against Chait Singh; was granted an allowance of Rs. 4,000 a year by Warren Hastings on account of some villages near Zamaniā from which he had been expelled by Rājā Balwant Singh of Benares; and was one of the great farmers of the revenue in the early days of British administration.

The heads of the house have enjoyed the title of Rājā from the time of the Muhammadan Government. Nārāyan Mal formally obtained the title of Rājā from the Emperor Jahāngīr; his successors in turn were confirmed in the title; and when the British occupied Bihār, they confirmed the prerogatives of the family and the title of Rājā which had been granted to Rājā Bikramājīt Singh by the Emperor Shāh Alam in 1771. On his death in 1816, his son Jai Prakāsh Singh received the title of Mahārājā Bahādur from the Marquis of Hastings. He was twice presented by the Governor-General with a *khilat* or robe of honour, together with a commendatory *parwānā*, during and after the war with the Nepalese; and he also received *khilats* from the Governors-General, Lord William Bentinck and Lord Auckland, when on their way to the North-Western Provinces. On his

death in 1838, the property passed to his grandson, Jānki Prakāsh Singh, on whom the Governor-General also conferred a *khilat*; and when he died in 1843, apparently before he came of age, he was succeeded by his uncle and guardian, Maheswar Baksh Singh. He was recognized as Rājā by the Government of India, and a *khilat* was forwarded for presentation to him, on condition of his presenting a *nazarāna* of 78 gold mohurs and Rs. 2,000 in cash, as had been done by his predecessor. In subsequent official correspondence he was, however, styled Mahārājā, and in Bihār he was recognized as second in rank among the Mahārājās of the Patna Division; the first place having been assigned to Rājā Bhup Singh Bahādur, whose ancestor rendered eminent services to the East India Company during Lord Clive's time, and held the post of Naib Nāzim of Bihār. In 1872 he was formally recognized as holding the higher title of Mahārājā, which he had in fact enjoyed for 28 years before it was officially conferred on him; and at the same time the title was declared not to be hereditary. He was created a K.C.S.I. shortly before his death in November 1881 and was succeeded by his only son, Rādhā Prasād Singh, who already had received the title of Rājā for his services during the famine of 1873-74. In 1882 the Rājā was granted a *sanad* of the title of Mahārājā Bahādur on the recommendation of the Bengal Government, which represented that, as he was the head of the Rājputs in Shāhābād and took precedence of the zamīndārs of Bettiah, Hathwā and Darbhangā, who possessed the title of Mahārājā Bahādur, he should have a title not inferior to that of those noblemen. Mahārājā Rādhā Prasād Singh was subsequently made K.C.I.E., and died in 1894. His widow, Benī Prasād Kuari, who was left as sole heiress and executrix of the estate for his only daughter, the present Mahārānī of Rewah, is styled Mahārānī by courtesy, but the title has not been formally conferred upon her.

The Government revenue demand of this estate is Rs. 4,80,000 and its rent-roll stands at over 12½ lakhs.

Gāro-hāt.—A Chero chief, named Manda, is popularly believed to have had his citadel at Gāro-hāt in the valley of the Katana near Rāmgarh, 7 miles south-west of Bhabuā in the sub-division of the same name. Various ruins, tanks, reservoirs and the remains of brick buildings are found extending over an area of about 1½ miles from east to west and half a mile from north to south; and other works, also ascribed to the Cheros, stretch to the east and west along the northern side of the hills.

Gujrājganj.—A village close to Arrah at which Vincent Eyre finally dispersed the rebel troops which opposed his advance to the

relief of the Arrah garrison. The following account is condensed from Eyre's* own description of the battle. Eyre arrived at Gujrājganj on the 18th August 1857 and bivouacked for the night outside the village. At daybreak the force again moved on and had just cleared the village when bugles were heard sounding the assembly ahead, and it was evident that the enemy had come out of Arrah to dispute his advance. They soon showed themselves occupying the wood in front, and large bodies were seen to extend themselves along the woods on either flank with the evident intention of surrounding the little force opposed to them. Eyre thereupon opened fire with his three guns and caused the enemy to screen themselves behind some broken ground in front. From this they opened a heavy fire of musketry, but galled by the accurate fire of Eyre's skirmishing parties, they gradually fell back to the shelter of the woods. Meanwhile, Eyre directed the full fire of his artillery on their centre; they scattered themselves right and left, leaving the road clear; and under cover of the Enfield rifles, the guns and baggage were promptly moved forward and pushed through the wood.

Emerging from this, the road became an elevated causeway, bounded on their either side by inundated rice-fields, across which the baffled enemy could only open a distant fire. Finding their intentions thus frustrated, they hurried back to intercept the force at Bibiganj about 2 miles ahead, where they had effectually destroyed a bridge, and completely commanded the approaches to it from the houses of the village and the breastworks they had thrown up. Eyre sent out scouts to search for a ford across the river Banās, which separated him from the enemy, but no ford was discovered; and as it was plainly impossible to effect a passage over the bridge, Eyre determined on making a flank march to the nearest point of the railway embankment, distant only one mile, along which there was a direct road to Arrah. This movement was for a time masked by the guns, which opened a brisk fire upon the village; but no sooner did the enemy discover the manœuvre, than they hastened in great numbers to intercept the force in a thick wood which abutted on the railway. *En route*, Eyre discovered a ford; but as his force had already passed it, he proceeded, followed up pretty closely by a large body of infantry and cavalry; while the three mutineer regiments pursued a course parallel to his own on the opposite side of the stream. On reaching the railway, it became necessary to dislodge the mutineers from the wood, from which they opened a very galling musketry

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* *See* Gubbin's Mutinies in Oudh.

fire. For a whole hour the force was hotly engaged at a great disadvantage, owing to the abundant cover which screened the enemy. Twice, during this period, the mutineers, seeing the guns left almost without support, rushed impetuously upon them, and were driven back by discharges of grape. At this juncture, Eyre learning that the 5th Fusiliers were losing ground resolved on trying what a bayonet charge would do. Rushing forward with a cheer, the troops cleared the deep stream at a bound, and charged impetuously on an enemy twenty times their own number. Taken completely by surprise, the mutineers fell back in the utmost disorder, the guns opening fire upon their retreating masses, and in a few minutes not a man of them remained to oppose the passage of the force. Thenceforward an open road was available, which skirted the railway to within four miles of Arrah, where the force was compelled to halt by an impassable torrent. The night was employed in bridging this over, and next day the guns and baggage marched, without further opposition, into the station of Arrah; and the relief of the beleaguered garrison was accomplished. It may be added that the scene of Eyre's action on the banks of the Banās is the identical spot where Major Munro first encountered the troops of Shujā-ud-daula, following them up from thence to Buxar, where he so signally defeated them on the 23rd of October 1764.

Gupteswar.—The caves of Gupteswar are situated in a narrow, precipitous glen in the Kaimur plateau, about 8 miles from Shergarh. The entrance lies a little way up the hill, and is about 18 feet wide by 12 high; the mouth has, however, been built up into an archway on which are some rough paintings of figures. The first cave, a damp, slimy place with a slippery floor of rock, extends almost due east from the mouth for about 120 yards, with steep descents at the end. About half-way, a branch leads off to the south-east, which, after running 90 feet or so, rejoins the main gallery. A narrow passage again leads from this into the west end of a second gallery similar to the first, which is about 370 feet long. This latter, about 140 feet from its west end, is crossed at right angles by a similar gallery, the south arm of which is the largest, being 80 yards long. Stalactites are numerous, and one of them, on which water drips incessantly, is worshipped as the god Mahādeo. According to popular tradition, subterranean passages connect the caves with Benares on the west and the Vishnupad temple at Gayā on the east; these passages are extremely small and can only be entered by scrambling on one's hands and knees through puddles of mud and water. A fair is held once a year at the caves.

Hariharganj.—See Nāsriganj.

Jagdīspur.—Town in the head-quarters sub-division of the Shāhābād district, Bengal, situated in 25° 28′ N. and 84° 26′ E. Population (1901) 11,451. The town was formerly surrounded by dense jungle, from which the mutineers long defied the attempts of the British to dislodge them. This was the stronghold of Kuar Singh to which he retreated on the relief of Arrah; and as it was necessary to break his power effectually, Vincent Eyre resolved to follow up his victory and drive him from his jungle fortress. On the 12th August 1857 the enemy were found in strong position, having a river in their front, the village of Dalur in their centre, partially protected by earthworks, and in their rear the formidable belt of jungle which covered the approach to Jagdīspur. The action was short but decisive. The enemy's right was concealed behind broken ground and low jungle; but as soon as Eyre located their position, he opened upon them with grape; and the men of the 10th Foot following this up with a bayonet charge drove them panic-stricken into the jungle. Meanwhile the Sikhs, the 5th Fusiliers and the Volunteers from Arrah held in check the mutineers' left, consisting of Kuar Singh's irregulars; and as soon as a howitzer was brought up against them, they too gave way, and a hot pursuit ensued, terminating only at Jagdīspur itself. Kuar Singh had barely time to effect his escape in the direction of Sasarām, leaving his stronghold in our hands.

In April 1858 Kuar Singh, who had been driven out of Azīmgarh by Sir E. Lugard, again made his way to the jungles of Jagdīspur; and the officer commanding the troops at Arrah determined on an attack, before the enemy, broken and dispirited, should have time to recover his energies or make any efficient preparation for defence. Accordingly, with two companies of H. M.'s 35th, 140 strong, 50 European sailors and 100 Sikhs, 5 artillerymen and two guns, he made a night march, arriving in the neighbourhood of Jagdīspur before daylight. When day dawned he entered the jungles, into which he had not penetrated far, when, meeting with some slight opposition, he ordered a retreat. The retreat on the part of the Europeans degenerated into a panic flight. No entreaties of their officers could induce the men again to form and face their pursuers, whilst heat and fatigue did their work and proved fatal enemies. Man after man dropped from exhaustion; and out of nearly 200 European soldiers and seamen who left Arrah, not more than 59 returned alive. Guns, ammunition, tent-equipage, etc., fell into the enemy's hands; but it is due to the artillerymen to say that they fought their guns to the last, and out of the five only

one escaped. The Sikhs behaved with the greatest bravery, forming a rearguard and covering the retreat; and perhaps it is not too much to say that but for them not a European would have returned to Arrah.

The jungle, which formed part of the confiscated property of Kuar Singh, was finally cleared by the present proprietors of the Bihiā estate. Mr. Burrows, a contractor on the East Indian Railway, had been presented with the lease of the jungle, on condition that he cleared a certain portion within two years; but as it still afforded an asylum to the mutineers, more active measures became necessary, and Government offered Rs. 6 a *bīgha* for land cleared by a certain date. With 4,000 men at work, a broad path a half-mile wide was driven right through the jungle, while minor gaps were cut at right angles, rendering the whole accessible, and the further concealment of rebels impossible. The estate was rapidly developed by Messrs. Burrows, Thompson and Mylne, the grantees; large number of wells were sunk; later the Bihiā branch canal was constructed through the entire length of the jungle *mahāl;* and the estate is now one of the most prosperous and highly cultivated areas in the district.

Koāth.—A village in the extreme north of the Sasarām sub-division, 10 miles from Bikramganj on the Sasarām-Arrah road. It contains a dispensary and is the head-quarters of an Assistant Engineer of the Public Works Department. The principal family, known as the Murtazas of Koāth, came from Bilgrām in Oudh with Nawāb Nurul Husain Khān, from whom they are descended. The latter, who was the first lieutenant of Shujā-ud-daula, Nawāb of Oudh, was given a large grant of land, with a revenue amounting to 2 lakhs, on making peace with the English. The family have lost nearly all their property and are now impoverished.

Mahādeopur.—A village in the extreme south of the head-quarters sub-division, 10 miles south of Pīru, containing the ruins of an old brick temple which General Cunningham considered the most curious specimen of brick architecture he had ever seen. It is 42 feet high, containing an upper and a lower chamber, and the top is crowned by a pinnacle of singular design, which in general appearance resembles two huge mushrooms one above the other. This pinnacle is similar to that which is believed to have crowned the fane at Bodh-Gayā, and the temple corresponds in many features with that shrine as it existed before its restoration [*see* Vols. XIV and XIX Reports, A. S. I.].

Masār.—A village 6 miles west of Arrah, which has been identified with the place, Mo-ho-so-lo, visited by Hiuen Tsiang.

The Chinese syllables Mo-ho-so-lo have been transcribed as Mahāsāra, and that this was the ancient name of the present Masār is proved by seven inscriptions nearly 500 years old in the Jain temple at Parasnāth. From the language of the Chinese pilgrim it appears that Masār must have been close to the Ganges and that it was inhabited by Brāhmans who had no respect for the law of Buddha. This account agrees with the modern village, as though the Ganges now flows 9 miles to the north, there are clear traces in the neighbourhood of the high bank of the old Ganges, and though there are no Buddhist relics, there are numerous images of Brahmanical gods. The remains at Masār are confined to these images, the foundations of some small temples, and a Jain temple completed in 1819 A.D. The latter contains eight Jain statues, on which are seven inscriptions going back to 1386 A.D., when some Rāhtor Jains of Mārwār appear to have settled in the village; another figure of Parasnāth contains an inscription stating that the image was dedicated by Bābu Sankar Lāl of Arāmnagar "during the prosperous English rule over Kārusha-desa." This record, though modern (1819 A.D.), is of interest as it identifies the district of Shāhābād with the ancient *Kārusha-desa* of the Purānas, while the town of Arrah appears as Arāmnagar, which is probably the true form of the name as handed down in the Jain books [*see* Vol. III Reports, A. S. I.].

Mundeswarī.—The oldest Hindu monument extant in the district is the ancient temple of Mundeswarī, which stands on the summit of an isolated hill, 600 feet above the plain, close to the village of Rāmgarh, 7 miles south-west of Bhabuā. Externally and internally it has the shape of an octagon, with doors or windows on four sides and small niches for the reception of statues in the remaining four walls. The principal entrance was to the east, where a few pillars still remain which evidently once supported a portico. Inside the temple is a linga with four heads (*Chaumukhī Mahādeo*) and a statue of Durgā, together with a large stone vessel shaped like a kettle and a stone chest which was probably used for hoarding the temple treasure. The windows were formerly filled with latticed stone work, which is still preserved in the northern one, round which are graceful carvings of the Gupta style. Till recently the shrine lay buried in débris and was overgrown to the roof with rank vegetation; it has now, however, been cleared, and steps are being taken to preserve the essential features of the building. From an inscription found *in situ* we learn that the temple dates from 635 A.D.; it refers to Udyasena as the ruling chief and records various

donations made to Mandaleswara, a name probably for an incarnation of Siva which was worshipped here. Several ancient statues have also been unearthed; and all along the eastern slope of hill various other remains are met with, such as small brick buildings, statues, rock-carved figures, and the names of pilgrims chiselled in the stone. From the relics still existing it is clear that the hill was once covered with a cluster of temples, of which only the main temple has survived [*see* Reports, A. S. B. C., for 1901-02 and 1903-04, and Report, A. S. I., for 1902-03].

Nāsriganj.—A large village (formerly a municipality) in the north-east of the Sasarām sub-division, situated in 25° 3′ 15″ N., and 84° 22′ 25″ E., about a half-mile from the Son, on the Koelwār-Dehrī road. It contains 3,707 inhabitants; but if the adjacent village of Hariharganj, which practically forms part of it, is included, the population amounts to 6,279. Nāsriganj is a large Government estate, forming part of the Nāsriganj *mahāl* escheated to Government in 1867 on the death, without heirs, of Musamāt Maulā Baksh. With Hariharganj it is the seat of a large trade; and was formerly a considerable manufacturing centre. It has lost the commercial importance it possessed 30 years ago, when there were 21 manufacturers of paper and 42 sugar refineries; but it still contains two sugar factories, and the manufacture of paper is carried on on a small scale.

Patanā.—At Patanā, a few miles south of Gāro-hāt in the Bhabuā sub-division, are a number of ruins attributed locally to the Savars or Suirs. The chief of these is a mass of rude stones, broken bricks and earth, 780 feet long from east to west and 1,080 feet from north to south, reaching in some parts to a height of 40 or 50 feet above the ground. East of this again is another mass of similar length, but of smaller height and breadth; while north of the village of Srīrāmpur is another elevation, consisting of stones, bricks and earth, and to the south is a circular mound called Bāghbān [*see* List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, 1895].

Rohtāsgarh.—Perhaps the most interesting place in the district, from an historical point of view, is the ancient hill fort of Rohtās or Rohtāsgarh, so called from the young Prince Rohitāswa, son of Rājā Haris Chandra of the solar dynasty, to whom the hill is sacred. Haris Chandra is the hero of one of the most beautiful legends of Hindu mythology. The story runs that Haris Chandra, a powerful monarch owning vast dominions, once went to hunt in a forest in which a *rishi*, Viswāmitra, lived, and that while engaged in the chase, he disturbed the contemplations of the

Legendary history.

recluse. The hermit saint, offended at this intrusion on his retreat, resolved to punish Haris Chandra, and appearing one day when he was dispensing charity, induced him to promise to give whatever he asked. He then asked for his kingdom and all his worldly possessions; and the Rājā bound by his vow at once fulfilled his promise. Thereupon, the importunate *rishi* demanded *dakshinā* to complete the gift, and, in order to comply with his request, the destitute but pious Rājā was obliged to sell his wife and son, Rohitāswa, to a Brāhman; finally, as the purchase money was still insufficient to satisfy Viswāmitra, he sold himself to a Dom at Benares. The Dom placed Haris Chandra at the Manikarnikā burning *ghāt* with orders to collect fees from all who came to burn their dead; and shortly afterwards Rohitāswa having died from snake-bite, his body was brought to the *ghāt*. True to his master, Haris Chandra humbly demanded his dues, which owing to her poverty his wife was unable to pay. All that she could offer was the ragged cloth which covered her, and Haris Chandra then insisted on her giving at least a piece of this. At this moment, Viswāmitra appeared, and, pleased at the piety of Haris Chandra and satisfied with his expiation, restored Rohitāswa to life and gave back his kingdom to his father. It is possible that this legend embodies in a mythical form an account of the early power of the aboriginal Doms; in East Bengal it is the belief of some Doms, calling themselves Haris Chandīs, that, in return for their forefather's kindness, Rājā Haris Chandra converted the whole tribe to his religion; and it is noticeable that the earliest traditions attached to Rohtāsgarh point to its being the home and stronghold of autocthonous races. The tradition that Rohtās was once the seat of their race lingers among the Kharwārs, Oraons and Cheros; the Kharwārs call themselves Sūryabansi and allege that, like Rohitāswa, they are descended from the sun; while the Cheros* claim that they held the plateau till they sallied forth for the conquest of Palāmau. Similarly, the Oraons assert that Rohtāsgarh originally belonged to their chiefs and was finally wrested from them by the Hindus who surprised them at night during one of their great national festivals, when the men had fallen senseless from intoxication, and only women were left to fight.

Hindu period.

The only records of Hindu times connected with Rohtāsgarh are a few short rock-cut inscriptions at various places on the

* The Cheros of the Vindhyan plateau claim descent from the Nāg or serpent. As Buchanan Hamilton quaintly puts it, they "claim the honour of being descended from the great serpent, who is king of hell, that is to say the devil, which is considered as a very ancient and honourable connection."

plateau. The first, at Phulwāri, dates back to 1169 A.D. and refers to the construction of a road up the hill by Pratāpadhavala, the Nāyaka or chief of Jāpila. Jāpila is evidently the modern Japlā, on the opposite side of the Son, in the district of Palāmau; and Pratāpadhavala appears to have been a local chief, who is also known to us from two other inscriptions on the Tārāchandī rock near Sasarām and at Tutrāhi, 5 miles west of Tilothu. From another short inscription at Rohtāsgarh we learn that this chief belonged to the *Khayaravālavansa*; and Professor Kielhorn has pointed* out that this name appears to survive in that of the tribe of Kharwārs. The only other record of Hindu rule over the fort is an inscription near the Lāl Darwāza, dated 1223 A.D., which mentions a descendant and successor of Pratāpadhavala, called like him Pratāpa.

Muhammadan period.

In 1539 A.D. it passed from the hands of its Hindu rulers to Sher Shāh, who at that time was in revolt against Humāyūn. The story current is that Sher Shāh, having lost Chunār, determined to get possession of Rohtāsgarh, and as the fort was impregnable, he was obliged to secure it by stratagem. He accordingly sent to the Hindu Rājā who was in possession of the fortress, and begged him to allow his family and treasure to remain there while he was engaged in the conpuest of Bengal. On his consent being obtained, Sher Shāh sent several hundred *dolis*, in the first few of which were a few old women and in the remainder Afghān soldiers and a quantity of arms. On the arrival of the train at the outer gate, the leading *dolis* were examined, and when they were found to contain only the women, the remainder were allowed to enter. The Afghāns then sprung out and attacked the guard, while the bearers used their staves until they obtained arms from the *dolis*. The guard were easily overpowered; Sher Shāh, who was in camp close by, was admitted; and the Hindu Rājā fled, leaving the Afghāns masters of the fort.

During his campaigns against Humāyūn, Sher Shāh left his women and children in this secure retreat; and throughout his reign it was held by a strong garrison of 10,000 matchlock-men, and was made the repository of "treasures without numbering or reckoning." Henceforth, Rohtāsgarh is frequently mentioned by the Muhammadan historians, who dilate on its strength and advantages. The Ain-i-Akbarī refers to its great circuit of 14 *kos* and states that the enclosed land was cultivated and full of springs and lakes, while in the rains there were no less than 200 delightful cataracts. From other chronicles we learn that the

* *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. IV, p. 311, Note 10.

steep ascent was guarded by 3 gates, one above the other, defended by guns and rolling stones; on the summit were towns, villages and corn-fields, and water was said to have been found in such abundance that if a peg was driven into the ground or a hole was dug, it welled up at once; in these circumstances, it is not altogether surprising to learn that the garrison had to be changed every 4 months.

Mān Singh, on being appointed viceroy of Bengal and Bihār, selected Rohtās as his stronghold; he had the fortifications put in complete repair, deepened and repaired the reservoirs, erected a palace for his own residence, and laid out a handsome garden in the Persian style. When he died, the fortress was attached to the office of Wazīr of the Emperor, by whom the governors were appointed. In 1644, the governor of Rohtāsgarh protected Shāh Jahān's family when that prince was in rebellion against his father. The fort was immediately under an officer known as a *kilādār*, who had a guard of 400 or 500 men and defrayed all expenses from the revenues of the estates which formed his *jāgīr*; these estates were managed by the *dīwān* who was an officer of considerable authority in the fort. Besides these, there were about 4,000 matchlock-men, whose duties consisted in guarding different parts of the plateau; they were recruited from outside and had to be constantly relieved because of the unhealthiness of the place. The regular garrison consisted of artillerymen who were permanently settled with their families in a village near the palace and were inured to the climate; they were under an officer known as the *hazāri* or commander of 1,000 men. After the defeat of Mīr Kāsim at Udhuā Nullah in 1764, he despatched his wife with 1,700 other women and children, and much treasure, to Rohtās; but shortly afterwards, on Mīr Kāsim's final defeat at Buxar, the Begum left Rohtās with the treasure and joining her husband at Tilothu accompanied him in his retreat.

Shāh Mal, the *dīwān*, then peaceably surrendered the fort to the English who advanced under Colonel Goddard from Tekāri. Colonel Goddard remained there for about two months, destroying meanwhile all military stores; after which a native guard remained for one year, when the place was finally abandoned. Since that time it has enjoyed a tranquillity broken only during the Mutiny, when Amar Singh and his followers infested the neighbourhood and several sharp mêlées took place. Finally, as it appeared that the mutineers intended to hold the place in force and to use it as a rallying point, a levy of 250 men was raised to occupy the fort, and a garrison remained there till the end of the Mutiny.

The fortress.

Rohtāsgarh is picturesquely situated on an outlying spur of the Kaimur hills, 30 miles from Dehrī and 1,490 feet above sea level. To the left of the spur winds the valley of the Son with low wooded hills on its opposite bank and a higher range in the distance. To the right, the hills sweep round forming an immense and beautifully wooded amphitheatre about 4 miles deep, bounded with a continuation of the escarpment; and at the foot of the crowned spur is the village of Akbarpur nestling in the midst of undulating hills. The remains of the fortress occupy a part of the plateau about 4 miles from east to west, and 5 miles from north to south, with a circumference of nearly 28 miles. It is separated from the table-land on the north by a deep and wide recess, called the Kariyārī Khoh, a branch of which, Galariyā Khoh, also separates it from the table-land to the west, leaving between its south end and the rock overhanging the Son a rocky peninsula or neck, about 200 yards wide, with perpendicular sides. There are about 80 paths up the rock accessible to men, which were all more or less fortified; while strong defensive works were constructed at the 4 great *ghāts* from which access to the summit was most easily obtained. The principal fortifications now existing are at Rājā Ghāt and Kathautiya, as the narrow neck joining Rohtās to the table-land is called. The latter was the most vulnerable part of the fortress, and the Hindus are said to have cut a moat across it as a defence against invasion. Mān Singh still further strengthened the defences in 1607 by adding some massive works which are the finest remains of the fortifications still extant. These consist of two gates on the northern side of the neck about 30 yards apart with many winding passages and bulwarks attached; both they and the ditch are commanded by a double line of ramparts and bastions, which, rising along a low hill, tower 60 or 70 feet above the moat for a length of 400 yards. Further to the north across the plateau ran another line of defences; but the only part now standing is a fine gate, called the Lāl Darwāza, from the red stone of which it was built.

The palace.

The ascent from Akbarpur, which is the one most commonly used, is over dry hills of limestone, covered with a scrubby brushwood, to a crest where are the first ruined defences; and this is succeeded by a sandstone cliff, cut in places into rough steps, which lead from ledge to ledge and gap to gap, well guarded with walls and an archway of solid masonry. Passing through this to the summit, a walk of about 2 miles leads to the palace, which was described by Sir Joseph Hooker as follows:—
"The buildings are very extensive and bear evidence of great

beauty in the architecture; light galleries supported by slender columns, long cool arcades, screened squares and terraced walks are the principal features. The rooms open out upon flat roofs commanding views of the long endless table-land to the west and a sheer precipice of 1,000 feet on the other side, with the Son, the amphitheatre of hills and the village of Akbarpur below." This estimate of the architectural merits of the palace is somewhat high, as the buildings cannot compare with relics of the same period in other parts of India; but on the other hand they are of unique interest as being the only specimen of Mughal civil architecture in Bengal, and as affording a striking example of the conditions of military life under that empire. The palace is an irregular medley of buildings extending from north to south, and is entered from the west through a great courtyard enclosed by high walls. On the inner side of this courtyard were the quarters which served as barracks for the troops; and at its north-eastern corner is the chief gate of the palace. This consists of a massive arch flanked on either side by the figure of an elephant carved in stone, from which it derives the name of Hāthiyā Pol or the elephant gate; an inscription over the arch records that it was erected in 1597 by Mān Singh. It opens on to a large vaulted guard room, passing through which one comes to the Bārahduāri, the best preserved structure in the palace, which is believed to have been used by the viceroy as his hall of audience. In front is an open verandah, supported by four double columns, which leads into a large hall with a vaulted roof overlooked by a corridor running along its entire length. Staircases at either side lead to the rooms on the upper floor, and to the flat roof which is crowned by small cupolas. Towards the centre of the palace is the Aina Mahal, the residence of the governor's chief wife, which stands in the middle of what was once Mān Singh's Persian garden. Of the other buildings, the most imposing is the *Takht Pādshāhi*, or Governor's residence, which rises to the height of 4 stories and is crowned with a graceful cupola. On the second floor are a handsome hall and gallery supported by solid pillars with carved cornices; on the third floor a small cupola leads to a covered balcony overlooking the terraced roof of the ladies' apartments; while the topmost cupola gives a magnificent view of the surrounding country and commands the whole palace area.

Other buildings.

Scattered over the plateau are the remains of various buildings, two only of which can be attributed to the time of Sher Shāh, viz., the Jama Masjid or Alamgīrī Masjid, a mosque with three domes, and the large mausoleum of Habsh Khān, generally known

as the *rauzā* of Hawas Khān; the latter building, which in style resembles the monument of Hasan Khān at Sasarām, is possibly the tomb mentioned by Buchanan Hamilton as that of the *daroga* or superintendent of works of Sher Shāh. In front of this stands a mosque built in 1580 by a eunuch bearing the same name, and close by there are a number of tombs also dating from Mughal times. The most interesting of these is the tomb of Shafi Sultān (1578), who died suddenly, when he was expecting to be promoted to the rank of Khān. It has some fine stucco ornamentation, and, like several of the other tombs, is covered by a dome supported on pillars. Similar structures are frequently met with in Rājputāna, where they are called Chattris; and evidently this style of building, which is never found in Bengal proper, was introduced by the garrison of the fort, who were largely recruited from Rājputāna. A similar importation from the North-West is the octagonal open pillared hall covered by a hemispherical dome, which stands in front of somf of the Hindu temples found on the plateau. The most picturesquely situated of all these temples is the Rohtāsan, or temple of Rohitāswa. It stands at the edge of the precipice on a small peak at the north-eastern corner of the plateau and is approached by a long flight of 84 steps; little of this temple now remains, and the tower and *mandapa* which once formed part of it have long since disappeared. The image of Rohitāswa is said to have been worshipped here until it was destroyed by the iconoclastic zeal of Aurangzeb, who erected a small brick mosque just behind it: the latter was a wretched building which has recently been demolished. Close by the temple of Rohitāswa stands the shrine sacred to his father Haris Chandra, a graceful building consisting of a small pillared hall covered with 5 domes; the image formerly worshipped here was also removed by Aurangzeb.

At a little distance from the palace, at the head of a great ravine on the western side of the plateau, is a cave overlooking a sheer precipice about 1,000 feet high. A Muhammadan saint is said to be buried here, and local legend relates that he was thrice thrown down the precipice bound hand and foot, but each time reappeared unhurt. At the foot of the plateau there is a large tomb with a long Persian inscription over the gate, which throws some light on the management of the hill fortress, as it states that at the time it was erected (1638) Ikhlās Khān was its *kilādār* with the rank of a commander of 3,000, and *faujdār* of Makrai and the *parganas* of Siris and Benares, and that his *jāgīr* consisted of the *parganas* of Jiwand, Sakror, Tilothu, Akbarpur, Belaunjā and Japlā. The *parganas* mentioned now lie in the modern districts

of Shāhābād, Gayā, Palāmau and Benares, and most of the names still exist [*see* also Eastern India by Montgomery Martin, Vol. I, 1838; Reports, A. S. B. C., for 1901-02 and 1903-04, and Report, A. S. I., for 1902-03].

Sasarām sub-division.—South-eastern sub-division of the district, lying between 24° 31′ and 25° 22′ N., and 83° 0′ and 84° 27′ E., and extending over 1,490 square miles. Its population was 539,635 in 1901 against 533,356 in 1891, the density of population being 362 persons to the square mile. The Kaimur hills in the south afford little space for cultivation, and this part of the sub-division suffered severely in the famine of 1896-97. Altogether 480 square miles are reported to be under cultivation, of which 224 square miles are irrigated by the Son Canals. The sub-division contains one town Sasarām, its head-quarters, and 1,906 villages, one of which, Dehrī, is important as the site of the head-quarters of the Son canal system. There are old forts at Shergarh and Rohtāsgarh, and Sasarām itself contains antiquities of great interest.

Sasarām town.—Head-quarters town of the sub-division of the same name, situated on the Mughalsarai-Gayā section of the East Indian Railway, 406 miles from Calcutta, in 24° 57′ N. and 84° 1′ E. Population (1901) 23,644, of whom 13,647 were Hindus and 9,994 Musalmāns. The full name of Sasarām (Sahasrām) is said to be Sahasra Arjanpurā, because the thousand-armed Haihaya Chief Arjuna died here. His thousand arms are said to have been cut off by Parasu Rāma, when he fled with all his followers to this place. Here he died, and his followers gave his name to the town which they had built. The town lies about 60 miles from Arrah and commands a fine view of the north escarpment of the Kaimur hills, 2 miles distant to the south. It is about a mile in diameter and consists of a mass of old brick houses closely packed along narrow lanes.

During the Mutiny Sasarām was a centre of disturbance. In August 1858 it was attacked and plundered by a body of 2,000 rebels from Arrah; and the part played by the people in driving this force away was recognized by Government in officially giving the town the title of Sasarām Nāsir-ul-hukkām, *i.e.*, Sasarām the loyal town, while Shāh Kabīr-ud-dīn, the Sajjāda-nashīn, who was their recognized leader and who loyally supported Government throughout the crisis, was rewarded with a *khilat* of Rs. 10,000 and a *sanad* under the seal and signature of the Governor-General. Amar Singh and his followers infested the neighbourhood, and a large British force had to be stationed in the town in order to meet marauding parties, to secure the tranquillity of the south

of the district, and to keep open communications along the Grand Trunk Road by which the troops were marching to the north. It was for some time the head-quarters of an independent command composed of 200 to 300 European soldiers with 70 artillerymen and four 9-pounder guns, besides a levy, 250 strong, which had been raised for the occupation of Rohtāsgarh. The inhabitants still point to a rising knoll to the north of the town where those rebel leaders who were captured were executed; and the cemetery close by at Koraich contains a number of graves of European soldiers who died here during the Mutiny.

The most ancient monument at Sasarām is an Asoka inscription, inside a small cave near the top of Chandan Pīr's hill to the east of the town. The inscription, which is referred either to the year 232 or 231 B.C., the last year of the aged Emperor's life, probably contains a date referring to the death of Buddha; but no absolutely convincing interpretation* of it has yet been found: other versions of the same edict exist at Rūpnāth in Central India, at Bairāt near Jaipur, and at Siddāpur in the Mysore State. The hill where the inscription is found was evidently an old Buddhist site, which appears to have been appropriated later on by the Muhammadans. The latter call the cave the *chirāgdān* or lamp of the saint, Chandan Pīr, whose *dargāh* is on the summit of the hill; they know nothing, however, of his life and history, although they insist upon his being called Shahid, or martyr, and worship at his tomb. General Cunningham, however, quotes a legend which seems to have been suggested by that of Sahasra Arjun. According to this story a Muhammadan saint living at Benāres had his head cut off by a Hindu named Chandan, and fled away without his head till he reached Sasarām. Here he asked a woman for some betel to eat, but she replied "What is the use of giving you betel when your head is gone?" On this, the holy man at once dropped down dead. A small building close to the *dargāh* was erected by a tobacco-seller in 1804, and at the foot of the hill is a ruined mosque of the time of Jahāngīr (1613 A.D.). On the Tārāchandī rock, one mile to the south, is an inscription of Pratāpadhavala engraved on the rock close by the figure of Chandī Devī. Monuments.

The magnificent mausoleum of Sher Shāh inside the town and the smaller one of his father, Hasan Khān Sūr, east of it, are among the most important ancient monuments in the Province. The former, which is one of the noblest specimens of Pathān Tomb of Sher Shāh.

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* *See*, however, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. I, p. 130, Asoka, p. 138, by Vincent A. Smith, and Early History of India, p. 154, by the same author.

architecture in India, is an imposing structure of stone, standing in the middle of a fine tank about 1,000 feet square and rising from a large stone terrace. This terrace, which is 30 feet high and 300 feet square, rests on a large stone platform with a flight of steps leading to the water's edge, and, for some unknown reason, was not built squarely upon it, but placed obliquely to its sides. The following description* of the tomb gives an account of the building as it existed between *1780—83*:— "The plan of this mausoleum is a square base, rising from the centre of the lake, having at each angle pavilions crowned with domes and finished with a cullus; from this base was a bridge that, from the ruins now remaining, must have consisted of 6 pointed arches which communicated to the side of the lake, and on two sides are a double flight of steps to the water; on the base is raised an octagon building, having 3 pointed arches in each face, and on each angle are pavilions finished like the former. Somewhat behind this runs an octagon 92 feet in diameter, and from the extremes spring the dome, which is finished on the top by a small pavilion, like those already described." When Buchanan Hamilton saw the tomb, the only means of access to it was a raft made of a bamboo frame-work on *gharās*; and the dome was crowned by a small cupola supported on four pillars. When the building was restored by Government in 1882, this cupola was pulled down and replaced by a pinnacle similar to that on Hasan Khān Sūr's tomb; and a causeway, 350 feet long, was built to connect the tomb with the northern side of the tank.

Mounting from the causeway to the terrace, the building is entered through a wide verandah, running all round the building with three arches on each side. The interior of the tomb consists of a large octagonal hall surrounded by an arcade of Gothic arches, from which springs a second octagonal storey, and above this rises the dome with a span of 72 feet. The grave of Sher Shāh lies in the centre with the right side turned towards Mecca, and is distinguished from the other graves near it by a small column placed at its head; the latter are ranged in two rows at its foot, and are said to belong to the Emperor's favourite officers. The hall is lighted by a series of windows above the verandah filled with stone tracery, and the Mecca niche is richly ornamented with passages from the Korān carved in stone. Two broad terraces, at each corner of which are cupolas supported on stone columns, lead round the building, the first being over the

* Travels in India during 1780—83, by William Hodges, R , 1793.

verandah and the second at the base of the dome. Traces of coloured enamelled tiles still exist on the domes of the different kiosques and the walls of the tomb. Its height from the floor to the apex of the dome is 101 feet and its total height above the water is over 150 feet; the octagon forming the tomb has an interior diameter of 75 feet and an exterior diameter of 104 feet.

In the design of this great structure two features have been introduced which appear to point to a Hindu architect. Both the lofty basement and the surrounding lake are common features of the Hindu temple; and when we find them combined with Hindu corbelling and flat architraves in the inner doorways, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the architect must have been a Hindu. Not only is the tomb remarkable for the great span of its dome, which is some 13 feet wider than the dome of the Tāj Mahal, but for grandeur and dignity it is said to be quite unequalled in Northern India.

Tomb of Hasan Khān Sūr.

In the centre of the town is the mausoleum of Hasan Khān Sūr, the father of the Emperor (1538 A.D.). It stands in a large courtyard, enclosed by a high wall of cut stone with towers at the four corners and a gateway to the east. The tomb consists of an octagonal hall surmounted by a large dome and is surrounded by an arcade with three Gothic arches on each side. This arcade is crowned on each side by three small domes and is richly ornamented with plaster engraved with sentences from the Korān; above it is a terrace running round the basement of the dome with a pillared kiosque at each angle. The tomb was once adorned with glazed pottery and profuse stucco ornamentation, but few traces of these are left.

Tomb of Salīm Shāh.

In the middle of a large tank, about half a mile to the north-west of Sher Shāh's tomb, is situated the tomb of his son, the Emperor Salīm Shāh, where his body was brought from Gwalior (1553 A.D.). The building was never completed, and all that can be seen is an octagonal-shaped building, about 10 or 15 feet high, with some of the arches turned. In the centre of the building is the grave of Salīm Shāh; on its left is a second grave, and at its foot five others of smaller size, the whole being surrounded by a wall about 7 feet high, rudely built of rough stones and clay. Probably the body of Salīm Shāh was deposited here in state to wait for the completion of the tomb; but the downfall of his family shortly afterwards prevented the building ever being finished. Enough remains, however, to show that it was intended to construct a large octagonal hall, 140 feet in diameter, covered with a dome and surrounded by an arcade, while at each corner was an octagonal projection on which kiosques or minarets would

have been erected. Perhaps the most striking part of the remains is a stone bridge, of pure Hindu construction, connecting the island with the southern side of the tank; it consists of eleven arches formed by large stone slabs laid from abutment to abutment and has ten small balconies projecting from each side, which would have been crowned with cupolas, had the design been carried out.

Tomb of Alāwal Khān.

Outside the town to the south is the ruined tomb of Alāwal Khān who, according to local tradition, was the officer in charge of the building of Sher Shāh's mausoleum and took advantage of his position to appropriate the finest stone for his own tomb. The eastern and western walls, which are surmounted by cupolas are in fair preservation, and the principal door has some fine carving round it.

Other buildings.

Of the other buildings in Sasarām the only ones worthy of mention are the building known as the *Kilā*, the Idgāh and the Turkish bath. The former is popularly supposed to be the old house of Hasan Khān Sūr, and though in a ruinous state is a fine building. The Idgāh near Sher Shāh's tomb was built by Mujahid Khān in the time of Shāh Jahān (1633–1636 A.D.). The Turkish bath, which, like the tombs of Sher Shāh and Hasan Khān Sūr, is maintained by Government, is ascribed by local tradition to the time of Sher Shāh. Mr. Twining, who was Collector of Shāhābād at the beginning of the 19th century, alludes to the bath as the old imperial bath and states that it was decorated with mosaic, similar to that of Delhi and Agra, composed of cornelians from the Son; no traces of this mosaic are left. The bath was constantly used by travellers along the Grand Trunk Road before the construction of the railway; and an old visitors' book contains records of their appreciation of it [*see* also Reports, A. S. I., Vol. XI; List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, 1895 and Report, A. S. B. C., for 1901-02].

The *khānkāh*.

Sasarām contains a Muhammadan religious endowment, which is, after the Mohsin endowment, the most important institution of the kind in Bengal. The Sasarām *khānkāh** was founded at the commencement of the 18th century by a devout Muhammadan, named Sheikh Kabīr Darwesh, the ancestor of the present Sajjādanashīn, or superior of the institution. It was endowed in the year 1717 A.D. by the Emperor Farrukhsiyar with 18 villages, given rent-free and producing the computed income of a lakh of *dāms*, or about Rs. 940 a year, "on account of the expenses of the *khānkāh*" without further specification. In the year 1762 A.D.,

* *See* Report of the Muhammadan Educational Endowments Committee, 1888.

the Emperor Shāh Alam added 41 villages, producing Rs. 3,000 a year, also assigned free of revenue "to the holy saint Sheikh Ziā-ud-dīn for the expenses of travellers and comers." There were also some gifts of smaller value made to the superior of the *khānkāh* for the time being by authorities inferior to the Emperor, but claiming the right to exempt land from the public revenue. The validity of the proceedings purporting to make the assigned villages revenue-free was examined by the resumption authorities in 1836, with the result that the order of Farrukhsiyar was declared to be good, while that of Shāh Alam was found to be of no force, inasmuch as possession of the land assigned by it was not obtained until after the establishment of the Company's administration, when Shāh Alam's right to make such gifts had passed away. No revenue was, however, assessed, on the ground that the lands were attached to a useful institution, which was declared by Government to be of a charitable, not of a religious, character. The grants of the subordinate rulers were likewise approved, except in two instances in which the exemption from revenue being declared invalid, the land tax was assessed at half the usual rate.

As to the nature of the institution for the support of which this provision was primarily made, it has been ruled by the High Court that the *khānkāh* is a religious foundation, being a place in which persons exclusively devoted to a spiritual life reside and carry on their pious exercises. It includes a mosque, where customary ceremonies are performed at certain festivals, and the tombs of devout persons at which prescribed observances are followed; and arrangements are made for teaching religious books and for distributing alms to the poor. This description would apply with little modification to most mediæval monasteries, with which institutions Muhammadan *khānkāhs* seem to correspond in many respects.

Local agents for the control of the endowment under Regulation XIX of 1810 are mentioned at an early period, but it appears that if any were appointed in addition to the Collector, who held the position *ex-officio*, they never enjoyed real power, as in 1842 we find the Sajjāda-nashīn altogether denying their authority, on the ground that the institution was of a private character. In that year Government insisted on the existence of the right to supervise, but directed that its exercise should be confined to the land granted by Shāh Alam, about half the whole, the rest being left to the Sajjāda-nashīn, without control or interference, as his personal remuneration for the duties performed by him. This arrangement did not work well, owing to friction

between the local agents and the Superior, and in 1849 Government definitely withdrew from all connection with the endowment, reserving only the right to intervene in the event of any future abuse or misappropriation. Attention was again drawn to the matter in 1865, when there was a dispute as to the succession, and the Board of Revenue, to whom the Collector referred the question whether the secular portion of the endowment should not be separated from the religious under Act XX of 1863, decided that the endowment was exclusively secular, and re-appointed local agents to exercise supervision under Regulation XIX of 1840. These local agents assumed a hostile attitude towards the Superior, Shāh Mohi-ud-dīn Ahmed, who openly challenged their assumption of authority as illegal, and also offered an irritating opposition in detail to every attempt at interference. The Board in 1868 passed rules for his guidance, regulating how much he should spend on each branch of the endowment, such as education, alms and religious ceremonies; but in 1870 they greatly modified these rules, on the ground that in their original form they deprived him of all initiative. On the rules being changed, the members of the Committee resigned, but not before they had sent in a report accusing the Superior of mismanagement. New agents were appointed, who in 1875, after a protracted conflict with the Superior and after an investigation at which he declined to be present, reported that he was guilty of misfeasance, in neglecting the rules laid down by the Board. On this finding, Government dismissed Shāh Mohi-ud-dīn from his office.

From 1875 to 1884 the endowment was practically managed by Government through the Collector as local agent. Under this system very satisfactory results were obtained. A cadastral survey was made of the estate, a record of rights was prepared for the protection of the ryots, the system of management by middlemen was abolished, and the income was thus greatly increased without raising the cultivators' rents. A fine stone building was erected for the Madrasa, which was raised to the first position in its class and affiliated to the Calcutta Madrasa; a new dispensary was also erected, and charitable works generally were prosecuted with vigour. The religious observances were not neglected, Shāh Mohi-ud-dīn being restored to the position of Superior expressly to direct them, and receiving a handsome allowance for so doing.

For some years Shāh Mohi-ud-dīn acquiesced under protest in this arrangement, but just before the expiry of the period of limitation he brought a suit for the restoration to him of the property of the endowment, on the ground that he was not to blame in

any way and that the institution being of a religious and family character, Government had no jurisdiction to eject him from his position. The Subordinate Judge found that not only had there been no mismanagement, but also that the dismissal was invalid, as the executive Government was not authorized to remove a manager of an endowment for misconduct, and that in the absence of any express enactment the power of dismissal vests in the Civil Courts. Shāh Mohi-ud-dīn was therefore restored and the Court, making the division between secular and religious objects which the Board of Revenue is empowered to effect under Act XX of 1863, declared that the villages granted by Shāh Alam, about half the entire property, should be held for temporal purposes, subject to the superintendence of the local agents, and that the profit of the rest of the lands should be devoted, free from all external control, to religious acts and uses, including the maintenance of the Superior and of his family. The distinction thus drawn was founded partly on the words of Shāh Alam's grant, and partly on the fact that Government in freeing these lands from revenue had declared them to be attached to a secular charity; and again in 1842 had placed them under special supervision, to which the Superior of the day yielded for a time. This decree was afterwards confirmed on appeal by the High Court.

Much of the property of the endowment has been lost, as one of the Superiors of the *khānkāh* dying without male issue alienated most of the land of the endowment to his descendants in the female line. The property was recovered for the foundation after prolonged litigation, which ended only when an appeal was made to the Privy Council. Five of the 17 villages granted by Farrukhsiyar and eight of the 41 villages given by Shāh Alam remain in the possession of descendants of former Superiors and are still held by them as their private property, as the legal advisers of Government, to whom a reference was made, were not in favour of an attempt being made to recover them so long after the original malversation. The total income of the endowment is now about Rs. 30,000, of which Rs. 7,000 is available for educational purposes.

Shergarh—Situated 20 miles south-west of Sasarām, is a ruined hill fort, which, according to Buchanan Hamilton, was built by Sher Shāh, after he had already begun fortifying Rohtāsgarh, as he was struck with its superior advantages as a site for a fortress. In the absence, however, of any authority for the statement, and in view of the fact that Sher Shāh carefully maintained a large garrison in Rohtāsgarh, it seems equally probable that in building this fort he was observing his vow that,

if his life lasted long enough, he would build a fort in every *sarkār* which would in times of trouble become a refuge for the oppressed and a check to the contumacious.

The plateau of Shergarh, which is much lower than that of Rohtāsgarh, is about 4 miles in circumference, and is surrounded by a stone wall with several bastions and fortified *ghāts*. The chief ascent is to the north, where a flight of broad stone steps winds up to a great gate on the lower part of the plateau; passing through this, the road passes over a depression, where there is a large tank, and leads through two more strongly fortified gates to the summit of a higher slope on which the palace stands. It is situated on the edge of a precipice and commands a beautiful view over the valley of the Dargautī and the hills beyond; the buildings consist of two square open courtyards, surrounded by 4 open galleries, which are supported by pillars in front and open into a few closed rooms behind. Owing to the slope of the ground, the southern courtyard is much higher than the northern one, and again the northern gallery in the latter is lower than the other three. Local tradition asserts that this arrangement was adopted because the northern court was occupied by the ladies of the zanāna who could thus easily be watched by the men, while they were prevented from looking into the male apartments. Some of the carvings on the pillars supporting the galleries are of good design and much better than anything of the same kind at Rohtās.

The *taikhānas* or underground rooms inside the palace constitute the most remarkable feature of the building. Most of them received no light from above, and may have been used as store-rooms; one at least was used as a water-reservoir. One room in the northern courtyard, which, as already stated, is supposed to have been the zanāna, was well lighted by means of a skylight, and may have been intended as a place of retreat for the ladies in time of siege or during the heat of the day. Just outside the palace are two open pillared halls, which are said to have been used as a *dīwān-khāna*, or offices; while close to one of the gates leading into the palace there is a mosque.

Tilothu—At Tilothu, a village half way between Sasarām and Rohtāsgarh, is a mosque of the time of Aurangzeb, the date of which corresponds to 1677 A.D. The place is, however, mentioned in older records, and from the inscription on a tomb at the foot of Rohtāsgarh (1638 A.D.), we learn that it was a part of the *jāgīr* of Ikhlās Khān, who was then the *kilādār* or commandant of the Rohtās fort.

Tutrāhi—About 5 miles west of Tilothu, where the Tutrāhi, a branch of the Kudra river, leaves the hills, is a place of the same

name sacred to the goddess Sītala. It lies at the head of a gorge half a mile long, where the stream falls over a sheer precipice 180 to 250 feet high, and collects in a pool at the bottom. High upon the rocks, on a small natural terrace, stands a small statue of Mahishamardini, or Jagaddhātri, as the goddess is called in an inscription close by. From this inscription (1158 A.D.) we learn that the Nāyaka Pratāpadhavala, a local chief of whom there are other records at Rohtāsgarh and on the Tārāchandī rock near Sasarām, made a pilgrimage to the Tutrāhi falls accompanied by his whole household, five female slaves, his treasurer, his door-keeper and his Court *pandit*. Other inscriptions several centuries later are found at the same place round the figure of a female deity rudely carved in the rock.

APPENDIX.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, that the quiet of this district remains undisturbed. On the other hand, I am sorry to say that I have not been more successful in the apprehension of deserters or mutineers. The influential zamindars, unlike those of neighbouring districts, have not given me the slightest assistance; but while they endeavour to keep up appearances by sending in numbers of sepoys on leave, not one deserter has been apprehended by them, nor has any information of the arrival or presence of such been given by them. I have hitherto refrained from noticing in my reports the conduct of the Rajah of Dumraon and the Babo Koor Sing in this respect, because I was in hopes they would yet by zealous co-operation and assistance redeem their good names. Their influence throughout their very large estates is so great that if they chose they could be of the greatest assistance, while, on the other hand, without that assistance I can get no information at all, and therefore cannot hold them liable for neglect. With regard to the Babo there have been, ever since the commencement of the present disturbances, reports, some of them tending to implicate him seriously. Hitherto, however, no one has come forward to accuse him, and I have had no reason to believe them. The Commissioner has the highest opinion of his loyalty, and I see no reason to doubt it, but I am of opinion, and I have urged it strongly on the Commissioner, that his position is such as naturally to make him restless and eager for change. He is nominally the owner of vast estates, while in reality he is a ruined man and can hardly find money to pay the interest of his debts. As long therefore as law and order exist, his position cannot improve: take them away and he well knows that he would become supreme in this district. I do not think he will ever openly oppose the Government as long as he thinks that Government will stand, but I do think that, should these districts ever be the scene of a serious outbreak, he may take it into his head that it is time to strike a blow for his own interests, and his feudal influence is such as to render him exceedingly dangerous in such an event. I am

narrowly watching his conduct, and the Commissioner has sent for him to Patna to speak to him on the subject of the reports about him. He is said to be ill, and I dare say will object on that plea, but I have heard that he has stated that he will not go to Patna and will resist if he is sent for. I hope soon to be able to speak with more certainty on the subject.

July 19th, 1857. HERWALD C. WAKE.

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, the following narrative of our extraordinary defence and providential escape. On the evening of Saturday, July the 25th, I received an express from Dinapore warning us that a disturbance was apprehended on that day, but giving us no other information. On the morning of July the 26th, a sowar whom I posted at Koelwar Ghat on the Soane came in and reported that numbers of sepoys had crossed and that more were crossing. I found that Mr. Palin, the Railway Engineer stationed at Koelwar, had contented himself with sending over for the boats to the Arrah side the night before, but when leaving had failed to destroy them, as he had promised to do. The police, I imagine, bolted at the first alarm. All efforts to ascertain the amount of the force of the rebels were unavailing, and the police left the city on Sunday, the 26th.

Thinking it highly inadvisable to abandon the station when the rebels might be few, and having 50 Seikhs on the spot and finding the rest of the officers of the station of the same opinion and the few residents in the district who had come in to us willing to remain, we, on the night of Sunday, the 26th, went into a small bungalow previously fortified as much as possible by Mr. Boyle, the District Engineer of the Railway Company. Our force consisted of 1 Jemadar, 2 Havildars, 2 Naiks, 45 privates, a *bhistee* and cook of Captain Rattray's Seikh Police Battalion, Mr. Littledale, Judge, Mr. Coombe, Officiating Collector, Mr. Wake, Magistrate, Mr. Colvin, Assistant, Dr. Halls, Civil Assistant Surgeon, Mr. Field, Sub-Deputy Opium Agent, Mr. Anderson, his Assistant, Mr. Boyle, District Engineer to the Railway Company, Syed Azumoodeen Hossen, Deputy Collector, Mr. Dacosta, Moonsiff, Mr. Godfrey, School Master, Mr. Cock, Officiating Head Clerk of the Collectorate, Mr. Tait, Secretary to Mr. Boyle, Messrs. Delpeiro and Hoyle, Railway Inspectors, and Mr. D'Souza. We had enough otta and grain for some days of short allowance and a good deal of water for ourselves, but, owing to the shortness of

our notice, nothing but the barest necessaries could be brought in, and the Seikhs had only a few days' water ; but, as we expected the rebels to be followed up immediately, we had not much anxiety on that score.

On Monday, the 27th July, about 8 A.M., the insurgent sepoys—the whole of the 7th, 8th and 40th Native Infantry—arrived in the station, and, having first released the prisoners, rushed to the Collectorate, where they were at once joined by the Nujeebs and looted the treasure amounting to Rs. 85,000. This did not take long, and they then charged our bungalow from every side, but, being met with a steady and well-directed fire, they changed their tactics, and hiding behind the trees with which the compound is filled and occupying the out-houses and Mr. Boyle's residence, which was unfortunately within 60 yards of our fortification, they kept up an incessant and galling fire on us during the whole day. They were joined by numbers of Koor Sing's men, and the sepoys repeatedly declared that they were acting under his express orders, and after a short time he was seen on the parade and remained during the siege. Every endeavour was made by the rebels to induce the Seikhs to abandon us; heavy bribes were offered to them, and their own countrymen were employed as mediators. They treated every offer with derision, showing perfect obedience and discipline. On the 28th two small cannons were brought to play upon our bungalow, one throwing 4 lb. shot, and these were daily shifted to what the rebels thought to be our weakest spots. Finally, the largest was placed on the roof of Mr. Boyle's dwelling-house, completely commanding the inside of our bungalow and the smaller one behind it, at a distance of 20 yards. Nothing but cowardice, want of unanimity, and the ignorance of our enemies prevented our fortification being brought down about our ears.

During the entire siege, which lasted seven days, every possible stratagem was practised against us. The cannons were fired as frequently as they could prepare shot, with which they were at first unprovided, and incessant assaults were made upon the bungalow. Not only did our Seikhs behave with perfect coolness and patience, but their untiring labour met and prevented every threatened disaster. Water began to run short ; a well 18 feet by 4 was dug in less than 12 hours. The rebels raised a barricade on the top of the opposite house ; our own grew in the same proportion. A shot shook a weak place in our defence ; the place was made twice as strong as before. We began to feel the want of animal food and short allowance of grain ; a sally was made at night and 4 sheep brought in ; and finally, when we

ascertained beyond a doubt that the enemy were undermining us, a countermine was quickly dug.

On the 30th troops sent to our relief from Dinapore were attacked and beaten back close to the entrance of the town. On the next day the rebels returned, and, telling us that they had annihilated our relief, offered the Seikhs and the women and children (of which there were none with us) their lives and liberty if they would give up the Government officers. On August the 1st we were all offered our lives and leave to go to Calcutta if we would give up our arms. On the 2nd the greater part of the sepoys went out to meet Major Eyre's field force, and on their being soundly thrashed, the rest of them deserted the station, and that night we went out and found their mine had reached our foundations, and a canvas tube filled with gunpowder was lying handy to blow us up, in which, however, I do not think they would have succeeded, as their powder was bad and another stroke of the pick would have broken into our countermine. We also brought in the one gun which they had left on the top of the opposite house. During the whole siege only one man, a Seikh, was severely wounded, though two or three got scratches and blows from splinters and bricks. Everybody in our garrison behaved well, but I should be neglecting a duty did I omit to mention specially Mr. Boyle, to whose engineeering skill and untiring exertions we, in a great measure, owe our preservation, and Mr. Colvin, who rendered the most valuable assistance and who rested neither night nor day and took on himself far more than his share of every disagreeable duty. In conclusion, I must earnestly beg that His Honour the Lieutenant Governor will signally reward the whole of our gallant little detachment of Seikhs, whose service and fidelity cannot be overrated. The Jemadar should at once be made a Subadar, and many of the rest are fit for promotion, and when required I will submit a list with details.

H. C. Wake.

I have the honour to inform you that the latest intelligence informs us that the Babo Koor Sing has determined to hold out in the jungles of Jugdespore, where he has still a large force. They appear, however, to be short of ammunition, especially caps, but it is rumoured that he has good hopes of the 65th joining him and the Irregulars from Segowlee are now in the district of Sarun and may also repair to his assistance. I have sent out to sink all the boats between this and C uprah and have scouts along the

boundary. A reinforcement of 200 of the 10th Queen's are expected to-morrow, and Major Eyre's present plan is to move on to Jugdespore. If this is carried out, we of course must accompany him, and I can act both magisterially and in command of my 50 Seikhs. Mr. McDonell and the detachment of Seikhs with him have been recalled by you. I would strongly urge upon you the importance of protecting the stud both at Buxar and Karuntadee, and this could be effected by moving the Sudder station to Buxar, putting the fort into thorough repair and leaving me a small force of Europeans and Seikhs with six garrison guns or more, if they can be spared, which might easily be brought up by steamer. It is useless keeping up the force of the Zillah Police; they bolt on the first alarm and are of no possible use. I have re-established the usual thana amlah and police here with the additional force appointed at the commencement of the disturbance, but I am certain that they will again bolt the day the force leaves the station.

We have formed a Court composed of Civil and Military officers, and have tried and hung nine of the mutineers, a Mahomedan vakeel who was appointed Magistrate by Koor Sing during my temporary retirement, also a young Mahomedan who has acted as Jemadar and in that capacity pointed out, and aided in the murder of Ahmed Ally, late a jail Darogah and a faithful servant of Government, also a Government chuprasee who took service under the Babo; and we severely flogged and released a number of petty marauders. We burnt the village of Enyail close to the town, from which quantities of European property were taken, and the inhabitants of which assisted the rebels in the attack of our bungalow. The Sessions Judge records all our proceedings. The cutcherries are in ruins, the records destroyed, and, except a few of the Collectorate books, there is not a vestige of Government property left, and there is nothing to make it desirable that Arrah should be maintained as the Sudder station.

I hope I need not urge any more the claims of my gallant little band of Seikhs, who have set an example to the whole of the country.

August 7th, 1857. H. C. WAKE.

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